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ABSTRACT

A tenth anniversary issue of the biannual journal of the Language Institute of Japan contains articles on teaching the four language skills, reading, and writing, speaking, listening, as well as cultural training. The articles include: "Rod City: Context and Focus for Student-Generated Language" (Robert Ruud); "Prediction as a Listening Strategy" (Michael Rost); "Teaching Writing in the College Classroom" (Tomoo Tsukamoto); "Reading, Writing, and Culture Shock" (Louise Damen); "Getting Into Texts (Part Two): Coherence in English" (Joe D. Palmer); "The Two-Track Variable Response System" (Nigel Rider, and Elena McCretton); "Inquiry Training for Increasing Students' Fluency" (Masakazu Karita); and "Using Short Newspaper Articles with ESL Students" (Derald Nielson). A ten-year index, list of publications received, and announcements are also included. (MSE)

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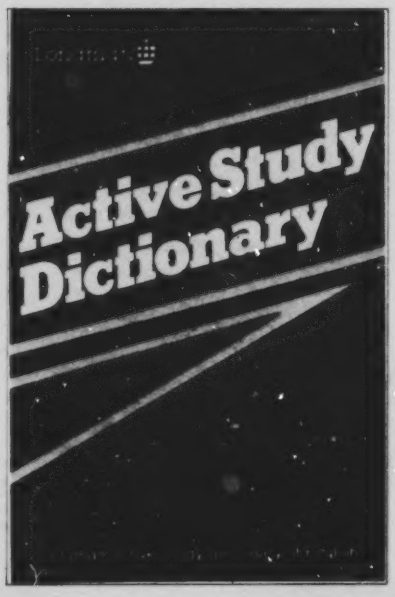

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ABOUT *CROSS CURRENTS*

Cross Currents is a biannual journal published by the Language Institute of Japan in an effort to contribute to an interdisciplinary exchange of ideas within the areas of communication, language skills acquisition and instruction, and cross-cultural training and learning. We are especially interested in articles on: 1) Language teaching and learning, especially regarding English as a Second/Foreign Language and English as an International Language; 2) Language teaching and learning as they apply to the situation in Japan; and 3) Cross-cultural communication issues. We also welcome reviews of recently published books in these areas.

Cross Currents was first published in 1972 with an emphasis on Japan and Japanese students of English. In order to serve the needs of our growing international readership better, we strive to publish articles concerned with teaching methodologies, techniques, and general issues which are multicultural rather than culture-specific. While articles demonstrating solid and thoughtful research are greatly appreciated, always kept in mind is the necessity for readability and practicality for our readers, the classroom teachers. We make every effort to balance abstract and theoretical articles with articles directly applicable to the classroom. Short practical articles are featured in our Bright Ideas section.

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Please direct all manuscript correspondence to:

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Summaries of the Articles

Rod City: Context and Focus for Student-Generated Language
Robert Ruud

Rod City is a technique developed to give ESL students concentrated practice in expressing themselves accurately through a narrative which they invent and build upon from class to class. This technique makes use of a visual context allowing students to understand and express themselves in English through a network of concepts. Special attention is paid to keeping language student-generated and to precision of error correction. The first part of this article defines some important terms and briefly examines the background of the technique. Part two gives a detailed account of the technique in the classroom. The third part discusses some of the problems with using Rod City, and answers some of the questions teachers usually ask about it.

Prediction as a Listening Strategy
Michael Rost

This article discusses the notion of prediction and its role in listening comprehension. The article proceeds from a general overview of the role of expectation in comprehension and the semantic nature of predictions. Based on this overview, the article suggests specific classroom activities which may be used to encourage students to make predictions and to develop interpretation strategies.

Teaching Writing in the College Classroom
Tomoo Tsukamoto

This article discusses a number of issues involved in teaching English writing skills in the context of a Japanese college. Correction procedures and rhetorical skills (topic sentence and paragraph writing) are dealt with. Several integrated classroom activities are also introduced: summary writing combined with reading and listening, rewriting, dictation, speech writing, feedback in English, and letter writing.

Reading, Writing, and Culture Shock

Louise Damen

Culture shock—or shock of the new—is a common experience for those learning a second language in a second culture. The need to synchronize language and cultural mastery as suggested in recent professional speculation calls for recognition by the teacher of the stages of culture learning of each student. To do so, all communication channels should be used, including the "silent" channels of reading and writing. If the teacher reads between the lines of student compositions and the students write about culturally sensitive problems, then more balanced linguistic and cultural competence can be achieved and the sting of culture shock can be lessened. The insights and suggestions contained in this discussion should not be confined to the second language classroom in a second culture; they apply wherever cultural change must be met.

Getting Into Texts (Part Two): Coherence in English

Joe D. Palmer

This article extends the author's discussion of the "grammar of text" ("Getting Into Texts: Cohesion," *Cross Currents 10*, 1: 1–21) to include those rhetorical devices which make texts situationally appropriate and effective. The author analyzes examples of both narrative and expository texts to show how an understanding of the semantic structure of discourse can be a powerful teaching tool in the ESL/EFL classroom.

Bright Ideas

The Two-Track Variable Response System

Nigel Rider and Elena McCretton

This Bright Idea takes advantage of the language lab's similarity to the disembodied voice one hears over the telephone. By using two tracks, students can listen to a question in context, respond either positively or negatively, and then switch to the appropriate track to continue the conversation. Thus, by varying their responses each time they listen, students can participate in a variety of simulated conversations, challenging both their comprehension and their fluency.

Inquiry Training for Increasing Students' Fluency
Masakazu Karita

Inquiry Training is a simple technique for increasing students' fluency by requiring them to ask as many questions as possible in response to "stimulus sentences" introduced by the teacher. The lesson is divided into stages which gradually allow the students more control, while providing the teacher with the opportunity to correct errors and to clarify grammatical points.

Using Short Newspaper Articles with ESL Students
Derald Nielson

This Bright Idea presents a technique for using news materials for a student-generated language class. The students work together to discuss and define new vocabulary items and then delve deeper into the background of the material by asking and answering questions that they would like to pose to the principals, imagined or real, of the article.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

The preparation of our Ten-Year Index has given us an opportunity to review the growth of *Cross Currents* since its founding in the summer of 1972. The early volumes focused almost entirely on cross-cultural relations between Japan and the West and on teaching English in Japan. As our international readership grew, and as we began to receive more manuscripts from outside Japan, our journal came to reflect a more international perspective and, at the same time, began to incorporate a greater awareness of new developments in ESL/EFL theory and methodology. We hope that the index (included in this issue) will help our readers to discover articles of interest from past issues.

The index reflects the wide range of approaches to language learning and culture learning from *Cross Currents'* past, and the current issue provides a similar variety of material and outlook, including articles focusing on speaking, listening, reading, writing, and cultural training. In our first article, "Rod City: Context and Focus for Student-Generated Language," Robert Ruud describes a technique for using student-generated language as the basis for an integrated sequence of language lessons. Ruud offers advice as to how the teacher can provide focus and structure to the lesson while allowing students the freedom to exercise their creativity in language use.

While Ruud's article concentrates on grammar and speaking skills, our next article focuses on listening, as Michael Rost offers an insightful look at the role of "Prediction as a Listening Strategy." Basing his remarks on recent research, Rost proposes a variety of preparation and prediction activities designed to help the ESL student develop listening strategies similar to those of native speakers.

"Getting Into Texts (Part Two): Coherence in English" by Joe D. Palmer and "Teaching Writing in the College Classroom" by Tomoo Tsukamoto look at reading and writing, respectively. While Tsukamoto considers the problems faced by college English teachers in Japan, Dr. Palmer looks at the more general issues related to the nature of English discourse. Both authors offer useful observations as to how rhetorical devices give order, unity, and emphasis to written texts, and both provide practical exercises for incorporating these insights into the ESL classroom.

Louise Damen's article, "Reading, Writing, and Culture Shock," also explores reading and writing, but in her article, the goal is culture learning as well as language learning. Dr. Damen incorporates recent theory regarding the acculturation process and its relation to language learning and show how the "silent channels" of reading and writing can help students pass through the difficult period of culture shock to arrive at a deeper awareness of their own and other cultures.

This issue also contains three Bright Ideas, each focusing on a different language skill area. "The Two-Track Variable Response System" describes a procedure for using the language lab to simulate an authentic telephone conversation. Unlike most language lab activities, this technique permits the student to respond naturally to the tape and provides a means for the tape to respond appropriately to the student's replies. "Inquiry Training for Increasing Students' Fluency" describes a simple speaking activity which can help students increase both their fluency and their ability to formulate questions within a realistic context. "Using Short Newspaper Articles with ESL students" begins with reading and vocabulary development, then moves to a variety of speaking activities which will challenge the creativity of students at any level.

The issue also includes reviews of two excellent ESL texts: *Story Squares: Fluency in English as a Second Language* (Winthrop, 1980), a concept-based course designed to promote both fluency and accuracy, and *Basic Technical English* (Oxford, 1982), a new technical reading course aimed at the beginning level.

As mentioned above, this issue incorporates an index of articles, Bright Ideas, and book reviews from the first ten years of *Cross Currents*. In retrospect, it seems a small miracle that the journal has survived so long, considering the physical remoteness of LIOJ and Odawara, Japan. The credit for our continued existence must go to the over one hundred and forty contributors from all over the world who have chosen *Cross Currents* as the forum for their ideas and techniques. We want to thank them all, and to offer an invitation to language teachers and trainers throughout the world to become part of the future of *Cross Currents*.

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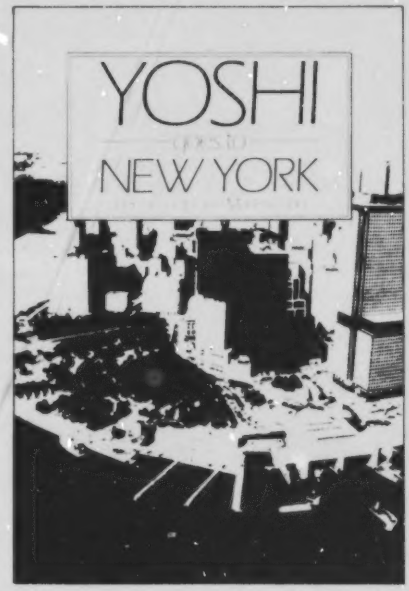
John Battaglia has an MA from the University of Iowa, has taught in Malaysia and currently teaches at the Language Institute of Japan.

Marilyn C Fisher has a J.D. (Juris Doctorate) from Duquesne University School of Law, Pittsburgh. She taught a course entitled "The Legal Environment of Business" for three years at Gannon University, Erie and has taught at the Language Institute of Japan.



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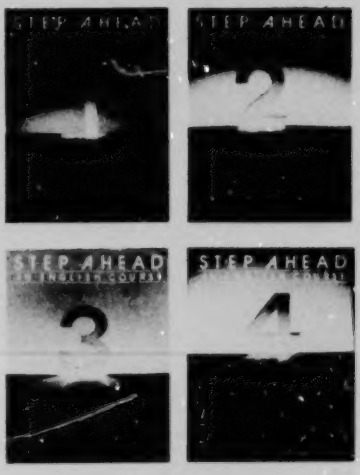

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Cross Currents
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Fall 1983

Rod City: Context and Focus for Student-Generated Language

Robert Ruud

Introduction

Fundamental to the design of any lesson is deciding what part or parts of language are to be focused on. Ideally, we want students to work on the areas in which they have difficulty or which are new to them. To determine what these areas are, the teacher either sets priorities or monitors students and responds to their strengths and weaknesses. When isolating these areas—usually grammar structures such as verb tense, prepositions, etc.—teachers often assume that structural rules must or can be learned individually and then applied to meaning in the appropriate circumstances. However, citing rules governing "correctness" often necessitates a great deal of qualification: "But there are many exceptions to this . . . " or "When this occurs with that, then remember this except when . . . ." Students are often left more confused than informed. Although language has been and can be learned this way, it leaves one wondering whether these components of language had to be divorced from the only place where they can really be understood, that is, in *context,* in order for their structure to be understood.

According to traditional grammars, and to some teachers' interpretation of transformational grammar, structure determines meaning. It is not surprising that grammars like Warriner's *English Grammar and Composition* (1951) can give a detailed "description" of the elements of the sentence without once mentioning meaning. Of course, these books are outdated in most modern

Robert Ruud has an M.A.T. in ESL from The School for International Training. He is currently Academic Supervisor at the Language Institute of Japan.

language teaching circles. But in some ways the perception of language has not changed so much. As a more current example, I recall an applied linguistics class I attended where the teacher would often write one isolated sentence on the board and we would discuss the semantics of the sentence and its ambiguity in terms of its structure. This may have been a worthwhile way of analyzing language in an academic sense. But if we had examined it in the context in which it was communicated, the structurally ambiguous sentence would have been much less troublesome.

Working from context means that words, the parts of a sentence, or the sentences themselves are never viewed in isolation; their meaning is dependent on their environment. Designing materials around context also entails establishing an extensive and dynamic background of information which makes the application of anticipation, expectation, and common sense possible. Getting to know the characters within, the history of, and the circumstances surrounding a situation is essential to being able to talk about what is going on. Lessons which are thematic, that is, which are logically sequenced and which add information and possibilities to previous lessons, create context naturally and meaningfully. The criteria for determining correctness, then, exist in the circumstances surrounding the utterance. In other words, meaning determines structure (while never absolutely predicting *a* given structure).

Concepts

If we are to abandon grammar as a base for designing curriculum in order to teach from context, then we need to think about how to organize language according to meaning, not form. In *Notional Syllabuses,* Wilkins defines *concepts* as "the meaning relations expressed by the forms within a sentence" and has made an inventory of what he calls "semantico-grammatical categories" (1976: 24–25). Knowles (1982: 33) modifies this inventory and presents it in the form of a working list.

What first frustrated me about this categorization was that unlike grammar rules, there were no clearcut divisions, and elements of one category were contained in another and vice versa. I noted the structural variation among the examples given for each of what Knowles labeled Conceptual Dimensions. This suggested that the categories could never be clearly separated. Wilkins writes:

> The fact that the categories are presented as an inventory is not meant to suggest that they are mutually exclusive. Any actual utterance inevitably contains many different kinds of grammatical meaning . . . . There is no way in which a single element of meaning . . . could be taught without other kinds of meaning simultaneously being introduced. (1976)

I still needed to be convinced that teaching not only could be done while treating concepts in context, but that it could also make more sense in terms of the expectations I had of my students and the goals I had set for them. I began experimenting with my own list of concepts which I could use as a guide in focusing my lessons.

Making a List

The main categories had to be general enough and varied enough so as to ensure that all major concept areas in English could be accommodated. For this I relied heavily on Wilkins and Knowles. The concepts to be focused on had to be of particular importance to my students, who were Japanese businessmen, salesmen, engineers, bankers, and chemists. For instance, the concept of Process is crucial and problematic for Japanese businessmen in almost any field. Engineers giving presentations, bankers explaining what is going to happen to an international payment, salesmen describing the workings of the machines they are trying to sell—all have to talk about a process. I therefore gave it more attention than Wilkins or Knowles. I also found expressions of Constitution/Make-up and Design/Nature to be very important for engineers and chemists and had to make my own specific reference to them in the list. I also thought the concept of Comparison took a higher priority and warranted a main heading of its own.

My list was designed for specific students, who had a very well-defined purpose for learning English. The needs of any other group of students will probably demand that revisions be made (see Appendix I).

Student-Generated Language, Rods-as-Words, and Inserts

Rod City evolved from a student-centered technique called Islamabad, in which one student tells a story of an accident or some other memorable experience and illustrates it with rods. (Stevick, 1980; Ruud, 1982).[1] Error correction is done subtly via the

[1]Cuisinaire Rods are made of wood or plastic, and come in ten different colors. They are one centimeter wide, one centimeter deep, and range in length from one to ten centimeters.

"counseling response," and the atmosphere of the activity is conversational. The activity serves its purpose well. But what I wanted in addition was a way of really fine-tuning correctness, and having students all keenly aware of the correction taking place, while still maintaining their interest in the story.

In order to involve all students in investment in the language, I moved from the Islamabad setting, which is from one student's experience, to an imagined city created by all the students together.[2]

In Rod City, the teacher begins the layout of a city by setting out one rod on a table around which the students are sitting, and naming it an important building in the city, such as the main railway station. The students then, preferably by their own initiative, proceed to build the rest of the city, placing the rods on the table and naming or describing the buildings or roads that they have built. When the city can be considered complete, the teacher introduces a time element, and students begin making up a history of the city. The teacher processes their language and guides them toward predetermined conceptual areas by representing their utterances with the smallest rods, one rod per word, on the table. When a certain number of sentences has been contributed, or when time has run out, one student is selected as the writer for the group. The group works together to reconstruct the sentences and the writer puts them on paper on the wall for future reference. The story continues every day, with about fifty minutes spent on it per day.

This rods-as-words technique gives the students a chance to generate concepts through language which comes from their own resources and previous knowledge of English. Because their sentences are laid out graphically, it is relatively easy for the group as a whole to recall what has been contributed. An important advantage to using rods-as-words is that error correction can be done accurately and objectively. The elements of the sentence, represented by the cubes, can be pointed to or moved around by the teacher. If a necessary cube is missing, this can be indicated. This reduces ambiguity by a precise indication of where the error lies. In addition, by the shift of focus from the students' speech to the cubes, the students' apprehension of being judged wrong by the teacher is also lessened. A relaxed and comfortable student usually tends to contribute more.

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[2]I would like to give credit to Derald Nielson of LIOJ, who originated the idea of designing a lesson around a city built with rods.

Focusing on rods-as-words also provides a way to guide students toward conceptual goals. As stated earlier, the structure within a given concept can never be absolutely predicted. However, certain structural items will almost necessitate that the language which follows be in a particular conceptual area. To focus on these structural items, which I call *inserts,* the teacher lays out a row of cubes to represent words or short phrases which are then used to start a sentence or add to a sentence, supplementing the students' own language. Before class, the teacher should think about the context which is being created and what kind of meaning this context affords, and then decide on a conceptual area according to student need. The teacher should have in mind some short inserts which will not supply much in the way of content but which will guide students toward the conceptual goal. An insert which guides a student into past time, for example, might be simply "X years ago." Inserts necessary for expressing purpose might include "in order to," "to," or "for." Sequencing inserts could be "first," "then," or "next."

Using rods-as-words for inserts is essentially different from using them for error correction. There are many cases in which I replace a word or phrase which a student has contributed but which is structurally or logically incompatible with the context. I also occasionally change one of my inserts to make the student's contribution correct, but this occurs less often, since it can lead us away from the conceptual goal. These are examples of error correction. Inserts, on the other hand, are the teacher's own contribution to the story without prompting from the students, and are solely for the purpose of focus. (See Appendix II for a complete list of the inserts with the conceptual goals and results.)

In summary, the basic principles on which Rod City was developed are:

1. That language can only be accurately described in context.
2. That meaning takes priority over form.
3. That carefully focused error correction need not necessarily preclude the use of student-generated language.

Rod City in Action

The following is an account of Rod City in use in a four-week course (nineteen days), in which I had six students in a class for three hours and forty minutes a day, five days a week. The students

were businessmen in an intensive course which had them in class nine hours a day. The language level in this class ranged from about 0+ to 1+ according to the FSI rating, or from upper basic to lower intermediate. These are detailed accounts of several of the lessons focusing on different conceptual areas. Each episode is about forty-five minutes long. Setting up usually took about a minute (longer on the first day), and coming up with and processing the story from twenty-five to thirty-five minutes. When a certain number of sentences had been contributed, or when time had run out, one student was selected as the writer for the group. The group worked together to reconstruct the sentences and the writer wrote them down on a large piece of white butcher paper tacked to the wall for future reference. The writing took from ten to fifteen minutes. The story continued every day. In the description below, the specific day for each episode and the conceptual focus for that day are given as a heading. Next, what actually happened in the class is detailed. Finally, a transcript of what the students actually wrote on butcher paper is provided (with my inserts underlined).

Day 1: Designation/Naming, Spatial Relations, Location

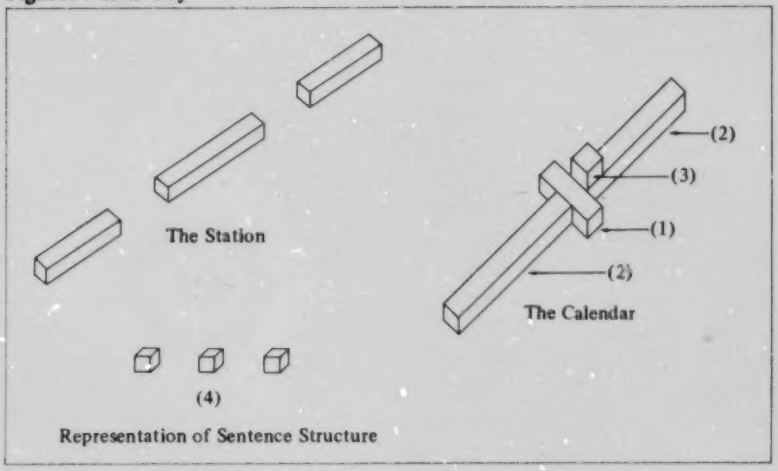
On the first day of class I did some greetings and general let's-get-familiar activities before starting the Rod City. After a break, I set a one-square-meter table in the center of the room and asked the students to move up within reach of it. I set a box of rods on the table and drew up my chair. I emptied the rods from the box, put them in a pile on the right side of the table, and put all the cubes in a separate pile near my right hand. When everybody was settled around the table, I took one brown rod, set it in the center of the table, and said "B Class City Station" clearly while looking only at the rod.

I waited about fifteen seconds before anyone said anything. A student said slowly, "What should I do?" I said, "We can make a city here," and I pointed to the area around B Class City Station. The students chorused, "Oh, oh," and the student who had asked the question picked up a black rod, placed it near the station, and said "city office." I looked at the rod and said, "Oh, the city office," in a matter-of-fact sort of way. Another student placed the junior high school. Another chose a snack bar. Soon they were reaching en masse for the rods, and saying or needing to say "Excuse me," "Go ahead," or "Please." They appeared to feel a desire and a responsi-

bility to contribute to the project, and at the same time they were using language necessary for allowing and encouraging others to contribute also. With every contribution, I responded with a statement like "Oh, so this is the _____," or "I see" or "Okay." I did not encourage students to add anything or elaborate, nor did I contribute any information of my own. My intention in this stage was to set the scene for things to come and to instill a strong feeling of confidence, investment, and self-assertion in the students.

I stopped the addition of new structures by making a slow cutting motion with my hand and saying, "Okay. That's interesting." Everyone had contributed at least one item. I waited about five seconds, or until I thought everyone was reconciled to the fact that the situation and roles were going to change a bit. I then took a red rod (1) and put it down on the right edge of the table, with the length going from east to west (see Figure 1). I then took two orange rods (2) and placed them with the length going north-south, one on either side of the red rod. I then took a white rod (3), placed it on top of the red rod, pointed to it, and said "Now." I waited just a couple of seconds and then moved it to just on the end of one of the orange rods next to the red rod. Someone said "Yesterday." I let it catch my attention, and tried to give the impression silently that the answer was very close but not quite what we could use at that time. I was about ready to speak when another student said "One year after." I quickly reached into the pile for three cubes,

Figure1: Rod City



and set them out in front of me in a line from left to right on the table, in a space I had reserved between the city and me. I pointed back to the student and then to the "time rod," and then at the three cubes (4) I had just set out. He repeated "One year after." But when I got to the third cube, I very deliberately removed it from the line, put it back in the pile, took another obviously different one and put it in the line and pointed to it. The same student said "after." I pushed the cube up out of line with the others and held it there. No one said anything in five seconds so I said "ago." They repeated "ago" without my prompting them, and I pulled the cube back down into line. I then pointed back to the first cube in the line and moved along the line as the students said "One year ago" together. I took the white rod and moved it to the other orange rod, on the other side of the red rod. A student immediately said "Next year." I moved on to establish "Five years from now," "Ten years ago," and so on, helping them when they had trouble. I also added another orange rod so we could go back twenty years.

What I wanted now was to work on Designation/Naming and then move quickly into Spatial Relations. When we had done "Twenty years ago," I thought that they knew the calendar well enough. I left the three cubes representing "Twenty years ago," and pointed at the white rod where it lay on top of the orange one and then at the first of the three cubes. The students said "Twenty years ago" as I moved along. Then I pointed in the general direction of the city. A student added "B Class City." I reached back into the pile of cubes for three more, placed them after "Twenty years ago," then went back to the first cube and move along the line as they said "Twenty years ago B Class City. . . ." I waited just a couple of seconds, added two more cubes, and said as I put them down, "consisted of." A student said, "Hm? Repeat please?" I repeated it. The student clearly had another idea of what "consisted of" meant and was questioning the correctness of the sentence. I kept my attention on the sentence itself and did not look up at the student. He repeated "consisted" several times very quietly to himself, shaking his head. I moved back to the beginning of the sentence and pointed to the first cube. Several students began, "Twenty years ago B Class City consisted of" and with that I pointed to a structure in the city. Someone said "the bar." I put out two cubes at the end of the sentence, pointed to the first of them, and he said again "the bar." I pointed back to what he thought was "the," and when he

said "the" again I pushed the cube up out of line. He repeated "the," but I held the cube where it was. Someone else said "a." I pulled the cube down into line, moved on, and several students said "bar" together. I worked in the same way until the sentence consisted of "Twenty years ago B Class City consisted of a city office, a library, a junior high school, a senior high school, a police station, a snack bar, a bank, a post office, a public swimming pool, a college, and a station."

We went over it all together just once more, with me pointing the way on the cubes and most of the students keeping up with me. Then we just looked at the cubes for about five seconds so that the students could reflect. After that, I gathered up all the cubes except the last two, and put them back in the pile. I waited about five seconds, hoping to make it clear that one sentence was finished and that we were moving on to another, and then moved the remaining two cubes to the left, where they could be the beginning of the next sentence. I pointed at the first and someone said "A." I picked up the cube, put it back in the pile and replaced it and pointed at it. Someone else said "The" and we moved on to "station." I inserted two cubes and said "was located." A student said "in center." I set out two more cubes.

I went back to the beginning of the sentence. The students said together "The station was located in" at which point I inserted another cube and a student said "center." I pointed quickly to the following cube ("center"), and came back to the one I had inserted. Someone said "the" and we moved on to "center," after which I placed another cube and said "of." A student immediately said "of the city."

We did three more sentences in a similar way: "The bank was just in front of the station. The snack bar was slightly west of the bank. The public swimming pool was located some distance to the south-east of the station." "Just," "slightly," "some distance," and a few other lexical and structural items were new to them and were either corrected or supplied by me. After each sentence was complete I gathered up the cubes and replaced them in the pile.

When we finished the last sentence, I left it intact on the table. I had previously put a large piece of blank butcher paper on the wall. I left the table, got a marker, gave it to a student, and told him, "Today you are the writer." Then to the class I said, "Please write all the sentences we did today. Start with the first one we did. Go

on to the second, etc. and on to this one, the last one," and I pointed to the cubes on the table. "Mikio will write them down." I then left the circle, sat down on a chair some distance away, took out a folder, and opened it. As soon as they were well under way with the first sentence, I left the room for about five minutes. They did not look up. Nobody noticed me when I returned. They had finished the first sentence and almost the second. It was a struggle for them. Some students contributed more than others and it was interesting to see how their strategies were different. Some students, for instance, first looked at what was being written and mainly used the context of the story to figure out what to contribute. Only then did they rely on their memories. Others contributed primarily the sentences they had memorized with the aid of the cubes. This second group of students had difficulty placing sentences in context because they didn't really understand the meaning of the context yet. But what I wanted to happen was happening. They were forming, sifting, and sorting their rules which governed correctness, and processing everything twice; once with my help and once on their own. But the rules were not confined structurally; they were grouped as various structures capable of expressing a given idea. The students were pleased to see that they as a group could recall the sentences word for word without mistakes, and be quite sure of their accuracy, though it took a lot of pooling of knowledge and memory. When they all agreed that they were finished, I came over, and Mikio gave me the marker. I read the story aloud at natural speed. There was one omitted "the" which I quickly wrote in without comment. There was a minor misspelling which I left as it was. I finished reading it and, keeping my eyes on it, said, "Okay. Interesting." I turned to the students and said, "Let's take a break." This is what they had written:

> Twenty years ago B Class City consisted of a city office, a library, a junior high school, a senior high school, a police station, a snack bar, a bank, a post office, a public swimming pool, a college, and a station. The station was located in the center of the city. The bank was just in front of the station. The snack bar was slightly west of the bank. The public swimming pool was located some distance to the south-east from the station.

In the above example the inserts were: *Twenty years ago, consisted of, was located.* When I can I begin the sentence simply by pointing to a structure in the city and setting out the cubes for it.

In the above lesson these included: *The station, The bank, The snack bar, The public swimming pool.*

Day 4: Cause/Effect, Purpose/Result

I started out with them setting up the city as we had left it the day before. I set out one rod and said "Traffic." We had established that a factory had been built, and as a result, the population had doubled. In my own mind, increased traffic was a logical result. I assumed that the students and I saw the sequence similarly, or at least that the students would assume that traffic would somehow be affected by the larger population.[3] But I had to see if they could express the relationship clearly. Somebody said "Traffic in the city" and I followed along placing the cubes as he added "was heavy." I pointed back to "Traffic" and they all said the sentence together. I inserted "and" just to practice the structure and perhaps give myself a little more detail to work with. One student said "Traffic accidents," and I followed with the cubes as he said "increased." We went over the whole sentence twice, and by then they were saying it smoothly. Now I had a situation which required modification, a problem which required a solution, which meant that the concept would shift from Cause/Effect to Manner/Means, and Instrument/Object. All I had to do to elicit that conceptual area was to insert "so," which the students probably understood. However, I thought that "In order to solve this problem" might be a useful alternative. It was a long insert, but the vocabulary was not difficult, and if there was anything new, such as "solve," I would have to hope that the word "problem," which I was sure my students knew, would suggest that a solution was in order. I went back over the words with the students, and when we got to the end, one student said "new road built," and I set out three cubes. I pointed back to the first cube and we went through "In order to solve this problem new road built," after which I took another cube from the pile and put it between "problem" and "new." I pointed at it and somebody said "the." I pushed the cube up out of line and held my finger on

[3]Wilkins writes: "Although there are philosophical difficulties, it is supposed . . . that whatever our language background, we see certain things in much the same way however differently we may report them in the various languages we speak" (1976: 34). Although it is not safe to assume that this is absolutely true, a working assumption of its validity will both confirm its elements of truth and shed light on where the two cultures are at variance conceptually.

it. I heard "that" and "this" and "for," but held the cube where it was until a student said very quietly "few, a few," at which I pulled the cube back down in line with the others and pointed quickly at the student and back down at the cube without looking at him, and inserted another cube between "problem" and "few." I pointed at it and the student immediately said "a few" and I moved on as he said "new roads," at which I quickly inserted a cube between "roads" and "built"; he said "was" and I pushed it up, "were" and I brought it down, and then moved on and he said "built." He went back over the sentence once alone, and then everyone said it together. The next sentence was "After that traffic accidents decreased, and traffic wasn't as heavy as before," of which I inserted "After that" and "and." Then I inserted "People could also." A student said slowly "go to their job quickly." Eventually it came out "get to work faster."

> Traffic in the city was heavy and traffic accidents increased. In order to solve this problem a few new roads were built. After that traffic accidents decreased, and traffic wasn't as heavy as before. People could also get to work faster.

Day 6: Purpose/Intention, Degree of Expectation in Logic or Social Relations

By now we had flood damage from a severe typhoon. We did not really know the precise nature of the damage yet, but perhaps in the course of doing the repairs that would have to be discussed. Something had to be done to get the city back to normal. In Japan or the U.S., the clean-up crews are usually at work before the sky has cleared. There was a social necessity, often expressed in such various ways as "have to," "must," "should," "it would be a good idea," and so on. What I actually hoped to elicit was something like "The water had damaged many other buildings," on my way to expressing how the disaster was to be dealt with by the citizens.

What came out was not quite the same, but proved just as useful in working on the same concept, and added another interesting reference to the conceptual categories of Means and Instrument/Object. I set out "The water." A student said, "come up many trees," to which several others said, "What?" as in "What are you talking about?" I put out the four cubes and pointed at the beginning of the sentence. The student said, "The water come—no,

bring . . . brought many trees" to which I added "from" and he continued "above" and he hesitated and then said "river." I took out "above," replaced it with another cube, moved it immediately alongside "river," pointed at it, and said "upriver." He said, "Upriver?" in a way that suggested that he was somehow familiar with the word, either through previous exposure or direct translation from Japanese.

Of course fallen trees get in the way in a modern city. I set out "These trees had to be" and a student supplied "take out of the city," which was quickly changed to "taken out of the city." We went over the sentence once as a group, and I put the cubes back in the pile. I was not too concerned yet about how the trees were to be removed. I wanted them to express the fact that it needed doing. I set out "Also." Somebody said "the bridge had to be repaired," slowly but without any prompts from me. The response he got from the others in terms of the shaking of heads and questioning looks suggested that not everyone in the class understood the meaning of what he had said. (The bridge was in fact in a real state of disrepair, since a student had knocked down one of its support beams.) We went over the sentence twice and I gathered it up. I set out "The damaged buildings," thinking I would get same sort of structure, but somebody said "the senior high school." Another said "No," and thought I would reject it, but I set out the four cubes, pointed at the student who had said it, and pointed back at the beginning of the sentence. He said "The damaged buildings," where I paused, and then went on to "the senior high school." I took another cube from the pile and placed it between "buildings" and "the." I pointed to it, waited about five seconds, and was about to say something when a student said "includes." I pushed the cube up out of line to indicate close but not quite, and the student tried several other words before getting back to "includes," at which I almost pulled the cube down and showed that I almost did, but then could not and finally someone else said "including," at which I pulled the cube back down into line. We then went back over "the senior high school," and no one continued so I set out a cube and said "and." Someone said "the city office." I inserted "had to be," after which someone said "repair." I put down a cube but pushed it up out of line. Another student said "repaired" and I pulled it down. I inserted "or" but nobody came up with anything in about ten seconds so I put a cube down and said "replaced."

I inserted "In order to do this," then later "had to," "so," and "to decide," and the writing afterward came out like this:

> The water had brought many trees into the city from upriver. These trees had to be taken out of the city. Also, the bridge had to be repaired. The damaged buildings including the senior high school and the city office had to be repaired or replaced. In order to do this, the city had to spend a lot of money. So the mayor called a meeting of the city government to decide how to make a lot of money quickly.

Day10: Comparison, Design/Nature, Constitution/Make-up

I set out "The new bridge." They said "was . . . built/constructed by Shimizu Construction Co." I set out "The old bridge" hoping to get something like "was built" to be changed to "had been built by (another construction company)," using the concept of past state to draw a comparison between the thing that had been and the thing that now was. But one of the shyer students said "had . . . become . . . scrap." Somebody else cut him off with "no, no" but I pointed at the student very briefly without looking at him and went back over "had become scrap." I waited until I was sure he was not going to add to it, about five seconds, and then I set out "and some parts" which got me into Constitution and also Instrument Relations and Purpose. Somebody said, "was . . . were used to . . ." and hesitated. Somebody added "the new bridge," and I set out the cubes. Then I went back and changed "to" to "in." Because I wanted to suggest the comparison of the two bridges and because there was a friendly rivalry in the class between two companies, I set out "The old one was constructed by" and they supplied "Penta-Ocean Construction Co."

There had been confusion before on the difference between "made of" and "made by," so I set out "The old one was made of" and somebody said "only rocks" which somebody else objected to by just looking at the contributor questioningly and saying, "Hm? Only rocks?" but I kept it by just pointing back at the student who had said it and going over it again. Then I set out "so" and they said "the old one was not so strong." I went back over this whole phrase once, then I very deliberately grouped the first three cubes in it together and put them back in the pile. I took one other cube, and put it where they had been. A student said "one," and I pushed the cube up out of line. Another said "it," and I pulled it back down.

Then I went to the end and set out "However, the new one" and an engineer quickly supplied "was made of steel." I set out "so" and he said "it was very strong."

I set out "The new one would probably last," again trying to get into qualities of the things that we could compare. Somebody said "thirty," then "fifty," and finally somebody said, "Oh, one hundred year." The first student questioned it but I kept it. I pulled "last" out very deliberately, put the rest of the sentence aside, and set out "The original one," then left a small space and then put "last." I went back to the beginning and they moved along with "The original one" until we came to the next cube and several said "last." Of course I wanted "lasted," and wondered whether pushing up the cube would confuse them and they would start searching for a different word. But I decided to try it, and one student said "lasted" within a couple of seconds and I pulled it down. Somebody said "thirty years" and said "Penta-Ocean" as he pointed to the Penta-Ocean employee in the class, and everyone laughed. Someone else added "only," and I added a cube for it. We went back over the whole sentence one more time and they wrote it up.

> The new bridge was constructed by Shimizu Constr. Co. The old bridge had become scrap. Some parts were used in the new bridge. The old one was constructed by Penta-Ocean Constr. Co. The old one was made of only rocks so it was not very strong. However, the new one was made of steel, so it was very strong. The new one would probably last 100 years. The original one only lasted thirty years.

Some Questions

Following are the most common concerns teachers have who want to use Rod City in their classes.

Some teachers worry that the careful attention students are paying to the individual cubes causes them to concentrate too much on the word and not enough on the larger context. This depends largely on the way the cubes are used. When struggling through the first stages of forming the sentence, it is true that the sentence is not being spoken fluently. Eventually the speed is increased, however, until the last (third or fourth) time students say it the teacher's hand, when pointing to the cubes, is not pausing at all from one cube to the next.

"When I first begin the Rod City activity, what if I set out a rod and the students don't say anything?" is a question teachers often ask. This could happen if the students do not understand what to do and are too embarrassed to say so. Although I have never had this happen, the time it has taken for students to take the initiative on the first day has ranged from three to around thirty seconds. Thirty seconds seems like a long time when you're just staring at the rods in front of you, trying to look interested in them. However, I believe it is crucial from the very outset to let students know that they are responsible for making things happen in this particular activity, and that here is a place where they can be creative and can bring in things that they have learned at other times and practice them. Of course, instilling this feeling involves more than just beginning an activity in a particular way. The students have to have confidence in the teacher's competence and feel secure in the knowledge that they are participating in something constructive. At times when students don't say anything and the teacher and students become uncomfortable waiting, then there are ways of expediting the construction of the city. One way to deal with this is to be more explicit in inviting students to participate by pointing at the unused rods and saying, "There is a lot of space around the station for other buildings. You can build them using these materials." Another rod can be handed to a student and the student can be instructed as to what to do. Or the teacher could also decide not to set out the first rod, but only tell the students to make a city. I do not prefer these variations because of my own feeling about initiative, but I have seen them work with other teachers.

"How can I change Rod City to fit me and my class?" Teachers generally feel they should stay with something they start. But teachers are different people, who all cannot and need not teach according to one ideology. They also have a responsibility, when something just is not working, to adapt the activity to meet special requirements. I had a class recently who did not work well with Rod City; they confined themselves to the very simplest sentences, most of which they knew, and it never occurred to them to add anything more than the basic structures of a city or to talk about anything but the most mundane occurrences. It took me a while to realize that they responded better in activities where I said, in effect, "Here's something interesting for you to say," gave it to them, and gave them an opportunity to say it. Rod City can be used in this

way, where the teacher plays a much more active role in determining what *happens*, as opposed to just how something is said. The teacher can also introduce situations which will elicit not only conceptual but functional areas, and also introduce characters (which my students have sometimes done on their own) for which role plays and dialogues are possible. For use with large classes, such adaptations would be a necessity.

Some classes of students have responded to Rod City with enough of their own language to make it possible for me to remain almost completely silent. When the technique is functioning in this way, observers often ask why I don't look at students more or play a more active role. They feel that they would be uncomfortable with the talking going on around them and responding only with the cubes. What I'm trying to do is give the students the opportunity to talk, and if they're talking, I don't have to. If they are not (and I believe that the teacher's discomfort with his/her silent role can actually inhibit students' willingness to speak), the teacher may as well enter the discourse and try to get as much as possible from it that way. I try to give the impression to my students that their errors are interesting, that everyone can learn from each student's errors, and my attention as well as theirs should be on the error itself, not on who is making it. In other activities in which precision and accuracy are of a lower priority, I interact more with my students.

Conclusion

Rod City is not a complete course, either in terms of language skills or in full coverage of the concepts. In the class described earlier, for example, there was no work on future time until the last episode. It would be inefficient to use Rod City every day in a course that only met for one hour a day. Other activities must be used in congress with it in order to achieve a balanced proficiency.

The major strengths of Rod City are its almost infinite possibilities for variation, its reliance on student-generated language, and the ease with which a teacher can insert conceptual (or grammatical, for that matter) problems into a realistic context for concentrated exercise. It also provides much of its own follow-up by displaying the finished product on the wall of the classroom for students' reflection.

Students' satisfaction with and progress via Rod City suggest that perceiving and teaching language from a conceptual point of view can be a viable alternative to the teaching of grammar rules. With the increasing emphasis on teaching language as communication, it is important to change our understanding of language itself, and put meaning before form. This entails being more tolerant of structural variety while consistently and clearly guiding students toward challenges which are of importance to them in terms of their own purpose for trying to learn the language.

APPENDIX I

As stated earlier, working on one concept at a time is not only undesirable, but, if there is a meaningful context for the language, impossible. Therefore, focusing from a conceptual viewpoint is challenging, and makes a good working list a necessity. I decided that the primary focus for each lesson would be one or two of the main headings from the list. Each heading would be recycled; that is, focused on in subsequent lessons about two or three more times. The concepts which were deemed most difficult or important for the students would receive the most attention.

I had to monitor myself carefully to keep the selected concepts clearly in focus and not to stray off onto tangents. If the focus was careful, then the expressions listed under the headings would be used naturally. I found it important to check over the results of each lesson for myself, to make sure the language that was generated really expressed the concept I had had in mind. However, I would always have to "tolerate" the presence of other conceptual areas within my area of focus. Sometimes for the sake of convenience, sometimes of necessity, I also included a secondary focus which seemed highly compatible with the primary focus. See Appendix II for a list of these.

I did not include the last category on my list (Temporality) when considering a conceptual focus for lessons. I did not think it unimportant; it just seemed to pervade all the other categories and would thereby inevitably occur naturally. It is therefore not listed in the transcripts of the lessons as being in focus.

I had reasons for not selecting some of the headings from Knowles' list. In the case of Reference and Classification, for example, I determined that this category would be covered in the course of everyday error correction. For instance, if a student refers to an item once, the next time he refers to that item (depending on its distance from the first reference) it would sound strange to me if he named it again rather than using a pronoun, and I would correct it. Likewise, when someone refers to, say, "a junior high school," most further reference to the school would contain "the" (specific reference) instead of "a." Depending on the experience of the teacher and the level of the students, such "givens" may have to be included more specifically in the list and in focusing.

CONCEPTUAL DIMENSIONS

Description

Designation, Naming, Identification, Attribution: This one; That one, B Class City Office; They were the ones with the least chance; The ones I told you about; The big one; The one with the lowest maintenance cost; It's red; . . .

Spatial Relations, Location: It's next to the bank; There are restaurants all around it; In the middle; It's downtown; Two miles away; In; On; Under; . . .

Dimensions, Shapes: It occupies a large portion of the block; Twelve by twenty-four meters; One hundred square meters of floor space; Round; Square; Cylindrical; Pear-shaped; . . .

State, Condition: It has been here since 1960; It's in need of repair; They're doing all right; Things look good; He has been in Japan since November; He has never been to Japan; It's been raining all day; . . .

Event, History, Sequence, Report: It was established in 1960; Originally it was a mining town, but then the minerals were exhausted and . . .; She went to Japan in November; It started raining this morning; They left; He told me to go; . . .

Reference, General/Specific: The building which took the shortest time to build; A bank was built in 1970; This bank was . . .; He wants a new car but she likes the old one; He bought a radio and TV but returned the radio; Anybody but her; . . .

Existence/Non-existence: There are two schools; The station now stands where the castle once was; We're having quite a few problems with this; There's not too much wrong with it; There are a few sharks in these waters; . . .

Classification Categorization/Exemplification: There are two basic types of muscle: those which we control consciously and those which we do not; Well-known guitarists such as Segovia and Williams; Included in this are . . . ; These come in two forms: block and slab; "Entertainment" and "transportation" will both come under "Miscellaneous expenses"; . . .

Process

In Progress: They're dumping the waste into the sea; The rocks are all being removed; He was watching the market closely; He was going to wait until the water had receded and then finish the job; He's now checking all the addresses; They were paying all their employees to distribute the advertisements; . . .

Motion: It approached Earth and then veered away; It moves slowly through the cylinder; We slide this over the rough parts; They roll or tumble out and are caught by . . .; Moving through; Into; Around; . . .

Cause/Effect, Causative: The dam broke under the weight of the water; Roofs were blown off houses by the 150 kph winds; She stepped on

the brake and the car stopped; This will enable you to . . .; We're having our workers undergo training; They can stop us from doing that; . . .

Actor/Object: They pushed the wrecked buildings into huge piles; They rebuilt the city; The solution covers the metal surface; The spring eases the door back into place; It delivers a small precise dosage; . . .

Instrument Relations, Means: They used a bulldozer to pile the wreckage, and then took it away in dump trucks; . . .

Passive: They died; They kept falling down; Two employees were fired; The pictures could be taken with the lights out; The code will be imprinted on the film magazine where it will be read by . . .; Osmosin will soon be introduced; The equipment packs into tote bags; The inflatable wind surfer assembles into a full-size outfit; . . .

Comparison, Contrast

Similarities, Differences: This one's big; That one's small; This one is bigger than that one; Some people do, others only talk; This car has the highest top speed; Now if you look at the Sony, you'll find that . . .; The Audi was above average, while the Princess was rated below average; . . .

Value Judgment/Preference: We should take this one because of the printout capacity; Better would have been to relocate the building to a stronger site; I like this one; . . .

Change: Something was done to it; It grew to six meters tall; He doesn't live here anymore; The mixture is compressed and becomes . . .; This used to be very beautiful; When I was a child I thought as a child; He turned this place around; We haven't solved all the problems yet, but it's better than it was; . . .

Quantity/Quality

Manner: It was very well done; We'll have to do it over; We use it like a large hammer; They have a unique way of dealing with the problem: they . . .; He reacted quite positively; . . .

Intensification, Degree: More importantly; It was done very carelessly; I wanted so much to leave at that time; It can't get much better than that; We've got so few problems that . . .; To a great extent . . .; I don't have to tell your how important this is . . .; It was the best I've seen; . . .

Number/Amount: There were too many of them in one place; A great number of people lost their homes; The average closed at 1200 for the first time; There were millions and millions of them; Great masses of . . .; We'll take sixty-five hundred units of these; One or two of those . . .; There aren't enough; . . .

Ingredient/Constitution/Make-up: It consists of . . .; Part of this solution is prepared from . . .; You need four eggs, two tomatoes, . . .; Inherent in this plan . . .; There are circular rings around a central core; It's got chlorophyl in each of these; I put six parts coffee to one part milk; . . .

Design/Nature: It has interlocking steel beams; It expands when it's wet; It never needs ironing; It's designed to withstand . . .; They have little or no built-in memory for data storage; Consisting of a number of independently moving spherical rollers linked together by four wires and controlled by hydraulic cylinders and valves, the robot . . .; The Model 100 needs only an inexpensive cable to be hooked up; . . .

Probability/Possibility/Necessity/Deduction

Scale of Certainty: They probably will; There's a chance of that; It's fairly certain; There's about a ninety percent chance of success; This will prevent the liquid from boiling; It will open automatically at low speeds; This is without a doubt . . .; That won't happen; We can be quite sure of that; They can't tell yet; They're thinking about it; . . .

Degree of Expectation in Logic or Social Relations: He'll have to quit now; He should be just getting off work; He'd better be careful; You must be very tired; I think we'll see an improvement soon; We have reason to believe; You can't do that; It's not going to work; . . .

Potential, Capacity: We can do it; This new machine has twice the capacity for storing information; It could present a problem; We'll be watching him closely; . . .

Purpose, Intention/Result: Stability at high speeds means . . .; We're going to have to cut back a bit; It serves the dual purpose of . . .; We write all our letters on it . . .; It's used for; . . .

Conditional, Contingency: If I bought it tomorrow would I still get the discount?; If he's back before noon we'll know; Should she not want to go; It depends on a lot of things; I might stay home, in which case you would have to represent us; There are a lot of factors to consider; There is nothing preventing us from . . .; You'll have to convince the board; . . .

Temporality and Sequence

Sequence of Events: First we cleaned the place up and then we ate; We waved good-bye and left; He screeched to a halt, jumped out of the car and . . .; We'll be going to New York, then on to Washington, and finally to Atlanta before coming home; . . .

Point of Time: At eight o'clock; Then; Right after I left; When they saw the lights; Just when I thought all was lost; Around that time; First thing tomorrow morning; Back in '49; November 22, 1963; Later; Someday; Anytime; A long time ago; Many years before that; . . .

Duration: For about an hour; Over a period of four years; Overnight; Forever; It lasted a long time; It started but then stopped right away; Since then; We're okay for a short time; I haven't been feeling well lately; . . .

Frequency, Inclination, Tendency: Every day; Not often enough; More times than I care to mention; Repeatedly; He keeps asking and asking; Like clockwork; Hardly ever; A weekly visit; Nearly always; Usually; Frequently; Sometimes; Now and then; Seldom; He's always doing that; . . .

Habitual: He works for General Motors; She used to sell books; She sells books; They don't make very much money; She has a propensity for . . .; This kind of structure tends to . . .; I go to Waseda University; I play golf twice a week; She smoked a pack a day for twenty years; . . .

Temporary: He's coming up the hill; He's building a boat in the basement; She was selling books a little while ago; He won't be doing that forever; She was always planning on quitting; It will be gone next year; She's taking a bath; I was just brushing my teeth; . . .

Time Relations: Nero fiddled while Rome burned; As soon as they had left I started cleaning up; It happened before World War II but after World War I; At the same time . . .; Little did we know that in the next room . . .; Simultaneously; In precisely synchronized actions; . . .

APPENDIX II

This is the complete history of Rod City in this four-week course. Inserts are underlined. Primary focus is indicated by *, secondary focus by **.

Day 1
*Spatial Relations
**Designation/Naming

Twenty years ago B Class City consisted of a city office, a library, a junior high school, a senior high school, a police station, a snack bar, a bank, a post office, a public swimming pool, a college, and a station. The station was located in the center of the city. The bank was just in front of the station. The snack bar was slightly west of the bank. The public swimming pool was located some distance to the south-east of the station.

Day 2
*Constitution/Make-up

At that time B Class City was quite small. The main businesses were banking and education. Most of B Class City's citizens were students. The government employees worked at the post office, police station, and city office. The average income among bank employees was the highest of wage-earners in the city.

Day 3
*Cause/Effect

Many changes in B Class City occurred ten years ago because a new factory was built in the city. Also, some apartment houses were built in the city. This caused many young people to come to the city to work in the new factory. The factory produced many kinds of sporting goods. As a result of the building of the new factory, the population doubled in ten years.

Day 4
*Purpose/Result

Traffic in the city was heavy and traffic accidents increased. In order to solve this problem a few new roads were built. After that traffic accidents decreased, and traffic wasn't as heavy as before. People could also get to work faster.

Day 5
*Agent/Object

In late 1972 a typhoon struck the city from the north. The wind was extremely strong and the rain was heavy. The wind destroyed the senior high school and damaged a part of the city office. The rain washed out B Class City Bridge and the city was flooded.

Day 6
*Degree of Expectation in Logic or Social Relations
**State/Condition (past)
**Purpose, Intention/Result

The water had brought many trees into the city from upriver. These trees had to be taken out of the city. Also, the bridge had to be repaired. The damaged buildings, including the senior high school and the city office, had to be repaired or replaced. In order to do this, the city had to spend a lot of money. So the mayor called a meeting of the city government to decide how to make a lot of money quickly.

Day 7
*Purpose/Result

The meeting to decide how to make the money took place at the city office. It was decided to borrow the money from the government. And the mayor went to the capital of the country to see if he could borrow the money. He had to persuade the president to lend the money to B Class City for repairing the buildings and the bridge.

Day 8
*Degree of Expectation in Logic or Social Relations

The mayor had to describe the status of the city and the extent of the damage to the city to the president. The water had damaged the bridge and many roads and land. The roads needed to be repaired quickly by re-covering them with asphalt. The bridge had to be replaced. The mayor would have to show the city to the president.

Day 9
*Sequence
**Purpose/Intention

The mayor sent an invitation to the president to come to the city to view the damage. The president said that he couldn't come but he would send another person in his place. The mayor and the president's representative visited the city office to discuss the city's situation. First, they visited the damaged bridge. Then they inspected the senior high school and the city office. Finally, the representative decided that the city had to be repaired quickly.

Day 10
*Design/Make-up

The new bridge was constructed by Shimizu Constr. Co. The old bridge had become scrap. Some parts were used in the new bridge. The old one was constructed by Penta-Ocean Constr. Co. The old one was made of only rocks so it was not very strong. However, the new one was made of steel, so it was very strong. The new one would probably last 100 years. The original one only lasted thirty years.

Day 11
*Comparison
**Instrument Relations, Means

The senior high school was repaired by another construction company. The water had damaged the foundation, so the school had to be relocated. Also, the roof of the school was repaired. The new school building is stronger and more beautiful than the old one was. The city office was repaired quickly and expanded a little bit. More room was available for meetings and conferences.

Day 12
*Purpose/Intention, Result

By early 1973 the repairs were almost all finished. Plans were made by the city government to plant trees and flowers all over the city. Also, plans were made to build many parks. The city council had to look for the places for the parks. They looked for places which were suitable. "Suitable" meant access to downtown, beautiful, and plenty of space and quiet.

Day 13
*Constitution/Make-up, Design/Nature
**Means

After the places were found, they began to make the parks. The parks were located in the northeastern part of the city. There were many benches, jungle gyms, swings, and a fountain in the center of each park. Each park also had a

flower garden and parking lot. One park was called "Riverside Park," and the other was called "B Class Park." The names were chosen by citizens' vote.

Day 14
*State/Condition (present)
**Purpose-Result, Cause-Effect

Since 1973 the city has changed a lot. For instance, there are parks, new buildings, and a big shopping center. Also the environment of the city has become better. The buildings are the highest in the city. They were built to provide office space for many companies. As a result, many companies came to the city to open branch offices. This caused the population of the city to increase. It also raised the income of the citizens and the tax revenue of the city government.

Day 15
*State/Condition
**Purpose/Intention

These days the city is large and prosperous. The people feel good about living in this city. The mayor continues to be popular and loves the citizens. The citizens like the city and keep it clean. There are plans to make the city more modern. These include the building of a museum, a theater, and an athletic field.

Day 16
*Conditional
**State/Condition (future)

In the next few years some more typhoons will come, and an earthquake will occur in the near future. If the typhoon hits the city directly, the river will overflow again. If the earthquake hits the city hard there will be a lot of damage. By the year 2000 the city will have changed dramatically. In 200 years the city will be like Atlantis in that it will be under the sea.

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Prediction as a Listening Strategy

Michael Rost

It has often been noted that people in familiar situations know what to expect and use their expectations to guide their comprehension of a new situation (cf. Mandler and Johnson, 1977; Loftus, 1979; Chafe, 1980). When these new situations are listening or reading texts, the listener or reader too uses expectations about discourse types to speed up processing. "Text" refers to what Halliday (1978) calls the "realization" of the speaker's meaning; that is, what the speaker actually says. This issue of expectations and how they influence perception and comprehension has received considerable attention in applied linguistics in the past several years. For the language teacher there seem to be some obvious implications in much of this research: there may be definite advantages to teaching language learners anticipation strategies in reading and listening (cf., Coulthard, 1981; Candlin and Saedi, 1982; Tadros, 1982; Johnson, 1982).

This article will draw upon some of the research that has been done in the area of expectations and comprehension, particularly upon research that has direct relevance to the issue of how anticipatory listening strategies might be encouraged in a language classroom. The article will first consider some issues related to the nature of text-based predictions. The article will then present some ideas for preparing students to make predictions when listening to texts. Finally, there will be a brief discussion of the notion of difficulty and text selection.

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The Semantic Nature of Predictions in Spoken Discourse

An obvious feature of speech production and perception is that it takes place in (what is ominously known as) "real time." Speech signals have to be decoded, that is, interpreted in some way, very quickly before they literally fade from memory (Miller, 1962; Dechert and Raupach, 1980).

This real time constraint is normally not experienced as a limitation since listeners, in their native languages at least, are seldom hard pressed to understand what is said to them and are well equipped to make speedy repairs whenever there is a breakdown. Apparently, over centuries of human interaction what has evolved is a style of language which is responsive to human processing capacities as well as a type of interpretive strategy which has routinized some of the speech comprehension processes (cf., Morton, 1981; Ong, 1982; Givon, 1982).

It has been claimed—and introspectively this seems to be true—that native listeners are often anticipating what their interlocutors are going to say (Brown, 1977; Sperber and Wilson, 1982). This anticipation is hardly an indication of clairvoyance; rather it seems to be evidence of logical inference based on background knowledge. This type of inference is apparently a natural part of the native listener's repertoire of interpretive strategies, a class of strategies which instructors can encourage second language students to develop (Bialystok, 1979; Faersch and Kasper, 1983).

When dealing with predictions it is of interest to note what is typically verbalized. That is, when you ask someone, "What comes next?" what kind of answer do they typically make? In certain contexts it is relatively easy to demonstrate that listeners can make predictions at surface levels of syntax, lexis, and phonology (cf., Miller, 1962; Rommetveit, 1971; Wold, 1978). However, in most discourse, unless the speaker is talking at an abnormally slow rate, the listener seldom has time to make actual predictions of surface units.

A more likely candidate for a typical predictive unit would be something larger, something more semantic in nature. If we adopt a hierarchical scale, such as the one used by Dechert (1983) to describe levels of speech planning, we can envisage a layered system of speech comprehension.

Figure 1: Hierarchical Scale of Speech Comprehension

Predictive Units	Text Levels
schema	
script	semantic level
concept	
clause	syntactic level
phrase	
word	lexical level
syllable	
sound	phonological level

In this system, *concept* refers to inexplicit hierarchical features within a part of a text. For instance, in the word "run" there are inexplicit features such as "legs," "movement," "speed." The next level of predictive units, *script,* consists of cultural features that usually occur together. For example, a "restaurant script" may bring to mind a polite waiter or waitress, a printed menu, separate tables for the customers, and so on. The highest level of predictive units is *schema.* This is the prototype or organizing principle for a text. For instance, a "detective story schema" usually pits a hero against a villain, the hero usually outsmarts the villain, and so on.

From the listener's perspective, listening involves both "bottom-up processing" (i.e., combining the lower units into higher units) and "top-down processing" (i.e., inferring what lower units the higher units might contain). (See Figure 1.)

Although predictions may be either "bottom-up" or "top-down," verbalized predictions often deal with the semantic level. To take an example, let us say we have a group of people who are listening to a taped lecture originally given to a group of American university sociology students. Here is a verbatim transcript of the opening segment:

> I think we're all aware of the fact,/ that language and disav/ of the underlying issues related to/ um language and disadvantage/ are somehow connected/ Now before I began my own research/

At this point (at the end of the sixth pause), the tape is stopped and all listeners are asked to formulate some kind of prediction, any prediction they can make about the rest of the text. Here are some sample predictions, made by native speakers:

He might talk about other people's research.

He'll say that the issues of language and disadvantage were not really known to be related before (he began his own work).

He'll talk about what he used to think before he began his own research.

He'll set up the audience to realize how significant his own research was.

Like these predictions, most predictions tend to be concerned with the semantic structure of the text: concepts, scripts, and schematic organization. What is important to note about these semantic predictions is that they are drawn largely from the listeners' own background knowledge, their own expectations about this kind of text and context. The text clearly does contribute signals which remind the listener of similar texts, but it is the listener who provides the expectations. When working with listening strategies in the classroom, the instructor needs to be aware of this constant interplay between the text and the listener's expectations.

In a prediction exercise the instructor will somehow interrupt the presentation of the text (e.g., by stopping the tape) at various intervals and ask the students to make predictions. When this type of exercise is to be used, preparation activities (i.e., activities prior to the presentation of the text) assume great importance. Preparation activities will, in some manner, help to set up expectations of what will be predictable about the text.

Preparation Activities

Preparation activities can be directed at the concept, script, or schema level of text. A preparation activity focused on the *concept* level would give background knowledge of the content of the text. The activity should familiarize the students with some of the key concepts in the text. For instance, with a class about to cover a unit on sociology, we might consider the following concepts: (1) the dialects of a language, (2) the advantages and disadvantages associated with speaking certain dialects, and (3) the functions of social research.

A preparation activity of this type might involve reading and discussion. The focus of the activity would be on previewing concepts rather than on listing potentially unfamiliar vocabulary.

A preparation activity directed at previewing the *script* level of a text might be quite similar to one previewing the concept level. Since scripts involve personal and cultural values as well as assumed mutual knowledge between the speaker and the hearer, scripts are often a prime source of interpretation difficulties (cf., Clark and Marshall, 1981; Schank and Abelson, 1975). In certain kinds of texts, such as sales reports, scripts may pose no particular problems to the audience, whereas with other kinds of texts, such as literary works, familiarity with the author's background knowledge may be necessary to make a satisfactory interpretation.

Certain texts communicate more through scripts than they do through other levels of text structure. Extended narratives situated within a specific culture often incorporate detailed scripts. For instance, in working with the American film *The Graduate*, I noted these scripts in the very first episode:

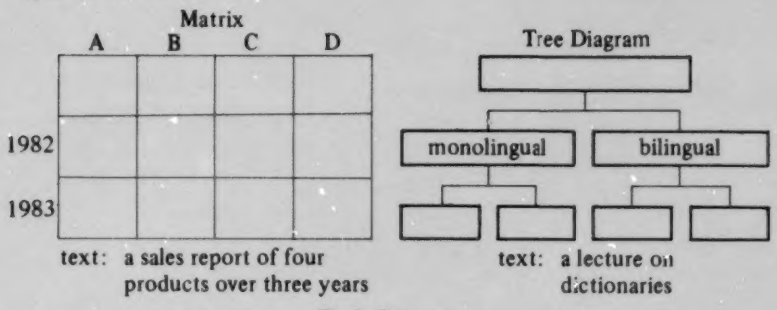
college graduation
East Coast (U.S.) university status
flying home to meet parents
nervous son
proud parents
only child
well-to-do Californian family
cocktail party at someone's house
friendly advice

For someone who is not familiar with what semantic content these scripts convey, an understanding of linguistic input only may contribute little to an understanding of the text as a whole. Consequently, in a classroom setting it may be necessary to preview some of the scripts in a text in order to activate a sense of expectation in the listeners.

A preparation activity directed at the *schema* level would preview the overall organization of the text. The preview could be some kind of analogue, that is, graphic representation (e.g., a picture or a map) or a network representation (e.g., an outline or a diagram). One simple type of preparation is the presentation of a partially completed network which represents the text structure.[1] Some networks commonly used are the matrix, the tree diagram, and the circle diagram.

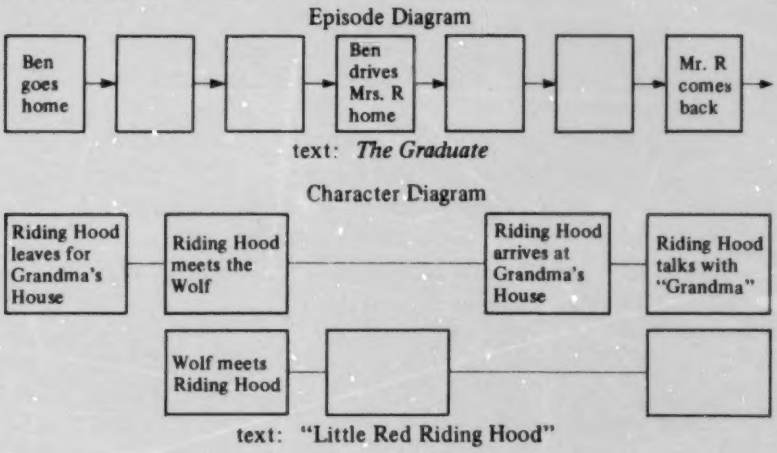
[1] This partially completed network could later be filled in by students as part of a "focused listening task" (cf., Blundell and Stokes, 1981; Maley and Moulding, 1981; Rost, 1981).

Figure 2: Networks



For narrative styles (e.g., anecdotes or episodic films), we can preview the text with a flow diagram. The diagram may be oriented around episodic structure or character development structure.

Figure 3: Flow Diagrams


Episode Diagram
Ben goes home
Ben drives Mrs. R home
Mr. R comes back
text: *The Graduate*
Character Diagram
Riding Hood leaves for Grandma's House
Riding Hood meets the Wolf
Riding Hood arrives at Grandma's House
Riding Hood talks with "Grandma"
Wolf meets Riding Hood
text: "Little Red Riding Hood"

In all of these preparation activities, the purpose is to provide students with background knowledge that will make the texts both easier to understand and more "predictable." Although such activities can be directed at the lexical or syntactic level, predictions made at the semantic level–concept, script, and schema–help bring students closer to native-like listening.

The Notion of Difficulty and Text Selection

A simple observation about difficulty is that perceived difficulty of any piece of discourse is related to the listener's familiarity with the type of discourse text it is: the concepts in it, the scripts it entails, its schematic organization. If much of the semantic structure of the text can be anticipated, the listener can devote more attention to the unpredictable parts (Mandler and Johnson, 1977).

Without knowing the background knowledge of our audience, it is impossible to state in advance what kinds of texts will be perceived as difficult. However, we can speculate that if the texts we choose are in the listener's sphere of interest and if they may be useful to the listener in some way (presumably in the case of ESP texts) the text will be easier for the listener to handle. Again as a generalization of this principle of "background knowledge," texts which build on each other (such as chronological episodes in a narrative) tend to be easier, more predictable, than texts which are semantically unrelated.

Since real-time prediction may be an unfamiliar task for many students, it may be wise for the instructor to begin prediction practice with texts that are easy. Through success with easy texts, students may gain the confidence to use prediction strategies with more difficult texts.

Conclusion

This article was written with the intention of contributing to a discussion of language interpretation and learning strategies by focusing on one set of strategies: predictions. Prediction is seen as a type of strategy that listeners can learn to use with new texts in order to make rapid interpretations of the texts. By practicing this strategy with different text types, learners can develop skills necessary for native-like listening.

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Teaching Writing in the College Classroom

Tomoo Tsukamoto

> "I hate the English composition class. I could appreciate and enjoy reading English if I got the meaning out of it. But the English composition class is horrible. What is usually required is a mechanical translation of short Japanese sentences that are totally unrelated to each other." (Hasegawa, 1978: 67)

This student's complaint is no news to most English teachers in Japan. They know that this is hardly a minority opinion held by a small number of dissenting students. Indeed, there is an underlying frustration among all the people concerned, both students and teachers alike. Writing programs at schools and universities fail to meet the psychological, intellectual, and emotional needs of the students. In this article some suggestions will be made for innovations in the writing program at the college level, so that both the dissenting student and the frustrated teacher may find a solution to the current problem.

Justification for Teaching English in Japan

A wide range of opinions may be heard among language teachers, educators, and the public at large as to how much English Japanese people need to learn. The traditionalist would point out the monolingual nature of Japanese society in which a good command of a foreign language is not necessarily a prerequisite in finding a good job, making a decent living, or conducting day-to-day interpersonal communication, except perhaps in a few big cities. A large number of people subscribe to the notion that English is important

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only as a school subject and that after graduation it is no longer a matter of serious concern. Those who are involved in teaching English, however, tend to put Japan in the context of the international community where there is a great need for using the English language as a means of communication. They stress the importance of English as a "language of wider communication among different nations" (Judd, 1981: 62), and point out that the English language is now enjoying the position of a *de facto* lingua franca in the world community. The present discussion is based on this view of English as a lingua franca.

It is obvious that English reading skills are of the utmost importance for the Japanese people. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Japan has absorbed Western sciences and technology chiefly by way of reading Western books and publications. Today the need to maintain and further improve reading skills remains strong, perhaps even stronger when we take into consideration the larger volume of written information that we have to deal with now.

By the same token, there is an increasing demand for speaking and listening skills. Our growing exposure to spoken English both at home and abroad gives us ample reason to believe that we should improve our oral and aural skills. One cannot be blind to the fact that there are now, by some estimates, 250,000 Japanese people working overseas and that throngs of Japanese tourists are visiting foreign lands every year. Also, the presence of an ever-increasing number of foreign businessmen, students, and tourists in our midst makes our encounters with them a daily occurrence in many parts of Japan. The language of communication in both cases is English.

What about writing? How do we justify the teaching of writing in English classes in Japan? There are a number of pedagogical reasons which some writers claim make the teaching/learning of writing English worth our efforts (Paulston and Bruder, 1976; Lomb, 1981; Byrne, 1979).

As any successful foreign language learner knows, a learner will be able to learn a foreign language much more effectively if he does so through more than one medium. Kato Lomb, a Hungarian woman who speaks more than a dozen languages fluently, including Japanese and Chinese, says that learning a foreign language may be compared to attacking a well-protected fortress. You can break the walls of the fortress only by all-out assaults from all directions at

the same time. Similarly, she says, the learner of a foreign language must tackle it through a variety of means, such as reading a foreign-language newspaper, listening to the radio, seeing a foreign-language movie which has not been dubbed in your language, talking to people who speak the target language, keeping a diary, and writing letters to foreign friends (Lomb, 1981: 195). Writing can provide one such important means.

In the form of home assignments, writing helps increase the amount of exposure to the foreign language. According to Lomb (1981: 60), students need a minimum of ten to twelve hours of work each week in order for learning to take place. Writing should be a good part of that minimum requirement. For the purpose of reinforcement, retention, and reviewing, writing exercises can be very effective. By writing it down, the learner is more likely to hold a particular language item. Also, writing serves as a compensation for those who are weak in auditory ability, or who are so visually-oriented that they need a constant reassurance in written form. Writing may also give an opportunity for individualized work. How to keep up good teacher-student interaction is a serious problem in a large class in which a student may feel lost in a crowd. Even in such a class, the psychological distance between teacher and student can be reduced considerably by giving a touch of individualization in writing assignments. Variety is also an important ingredient of any successful foreign language class. Writing activity, when properly employed, adds just such variety to the class.

To sum up, writing can:

1. Increase exposure to English.
2. Reinforce, retain, and review what has already been learned.
3. Give the learner with low auditory ability a chance to use a compensatory skill.
4. Provide the learner with physical evidence of his achievement.
5. Make possible individualized work in a large class.
6. Present more variety to the classroom procedures.

Planning for the Writing Course: a Course Syllabus

A course syllabus must be presented to the class at the outset of a composition course in order to explain to the students what they are expected to accomplish in the course. Unnecessary anxiety and

frustration may be avoided by informing students of what will happen in the course. Writing tasks, especially in a foreign language, may become nerve-racking unless proper care is taken. As Rivers and Temperley put it:

> What is written should be a purposeful communication, on the practical or imaginative level, expressed in such a way that it is comprehensible to another person. Otherwise, we are dealing with hermetic or esoteric writing of purely personal value which can be set down in idiosyncratic code. . . . Considerable disappointment and frustration will be avoided if the nature and purpose of any particular writing task are clearly understood by student and teacher alike. (1978: 264–65)

When presenting and explaining the syllabus to the students, the teacher must remember that he has to give his students time and opportunities to think over what they will do in the course. Not only at the beginning of the course, but occasionally during and at the end of the semester, the students ought to be given encouragement for their efforts. Passing out questionnaires at the outset to find out what the students' needs are, and at the close of the course as a course evaluation, gives them an incentive for learning as well as an opportunity for student participation in the designing of a writing course. A sample course syllabus for the writing course is given below:

> Course objectives
>
> 1. Through the experience of writing a number of compositions you will gain confidence in expressing yourself in English.
> 2. By practicing writing in English you will be able to reinforce and improve other language skills as well.
> 3. You will have a better understanding of the English language though the activities and discussions of this course.
> 4. It is expected that you will have a more positive attitude toward English as the result of having taken this course.
>
> Course approach
>
> As for the practical use of learning to write in English, you may be unsure or perhaps rather skeptical at the moment. You are advised to reserve your conclusion, however. You will realize that outside the confinement of the university campus the ability to write good English is highly appreciated and valued.

Activities

You will have opportunities to improve your abilities both in spoken and written English, although there will be more emphasis on writing. Our activities include writing essays, speeches, and social letters.

Course requirements

You will be required to write several short assignments during the semester. Also, occasional tests will be given with or without prior notice during the course. Good attendance and active participation in class discussion is expected.

Rhetorical Skills

Rhetorical skills need our attention in teaching composition. Some instructors (Teele, 1981; Hough, 1981) are struck by the relative lack of organization in students' writing. They point out that the students tend to produce poorly organized sentences full of unimportant details. Both Teele and Hough realize that it has to be made known to the Japanese learner that a paragraph consists of a topic sentence and several supporting sentences. The topic sentence represents the central thought of a paragraph and is more inclusive. The other sentences will break down the thought within this topic sentence, and help you to see the central thought in all of its meanings. The entire thought-spectrum, as it were, is presented sentence after sentence, as each sentence explains, illustrates, contrasts, or parallels the topic sentence of the paragraph (Leedy, 1956: 50).

With regards to the importance of good paragraphs, Hasegawa (1978: 75–77) proposes the following procedures to help the students produce a good paragraph. First, they are told to make up a topic sentence–which has to be a full, complete sentence. Then they are to write several supporting sentences. With the topic sentence and the supporting sentences, the students now have an outline upon which they will develop and expand their thought or topic.

Alternatively, students can be shown how to produce a topic sentence appropriate to a paragraph which they have already written. Faced with a paragraph with no topic sentence, students can make a general statement about the thought expressed in the paragraph and attach it to the top of the paragraph, making it its topic sentence (Leedy, 1956: 56). For example:

> In London the underground is a subway; in the United States it is a subversive organization. British drivers fill their tanks with petrol, but here in the States we fill our tanks with gas. To the Britishers, elevators are lifts and radio tubes are valves. And whereas our politicians run for office, theirs stand for it.

The main idea of this paragraph may be put like this: *The difference in the British and American way of saying things*. A general statement may be made: *The difference between our everyday speech and that of the Britisher is at once apparent in the terms each uses for common, everyday things*. The general statement can now be attached to the head of the paragraph:

> *The difference between our everday speech and that of the Britisher is at once apparent in the terms each uses for common, everyday things*. In London, the underground is a subway; in the United States it is a subversive organization. British drivers fill their tanks with petrol, but here in the States we fill our tanks with gas. To the Britishers, elevators are lifts and radio tubes are valves. And whereas our politicians run for office, theirs stand for it.

The topic sentence has also been dealt with by Kawada (1981). She asks her students to write a paragraph at the beginning of her course and after seven months of paragraph investigation to rewrite the same paragraph. She reports a great improvement in the writings of most students, as illustrated in the following example:

> Traveling to School in the Morning
> (Written at the beginning of the course.)
>
> When the train comes in, I always feel my heart is beating fast. The first thing I do is to stop reading my book and put it back into my handbag. Then I look around to see if anybody has come near the ridge of the platform in order to get a seat for himself. In that case, I must be very cautious because most of the time, when one goes near the white line, everybody starts crowding around the first two people in the line, and that means "no seat for me" if I do not have enough strength to push aside all the young men who are in front of me.
>
> Traveling to School in the Morning
> (Rewritten seven months later.)
>
> My traveling to Sophia Junior College in the morning usually starts with the fight to get a seat on a train at the Shinjuku station.

> It takes me more than two hours to go to college by the Odakyu line. If I miss the chance to take a seat at the Shinjuku Station, I have to keep on standing all the way till the Oné Station. When the train comes in, I always feel my heart is beating fast. The first thing I do is to stop reading my book and put it into my bag. I look around to see if anybody comes nearer to the white line on the platform. When someone steps out of that line to stand up just in front of the door of the train, the other people standing behind him rush toward the same door. This means "no seat for me," unless I become much more cautious and tactful in action than ever. To get my own seat, I must also have more strength to push aside all the young men around me.

Besides the general improvement of the student's writing, the reader would notice that the topic sentence, added at the top of the paragraph, makes the composition more readable.

Correction

Composition teachers, it is said, are hard to come by at Japanese universities. A possible explanation for this phenomenon would be that a composition course involves the time-consuming and strenuous activity of correcting students' papers outside of class. This, in fact, serves to discourage many teachers from undertaking a writing class.

The prevailing attitude is that every single mistake should be pointed out and corrected by the teacher so that the student will eventually learn to produce no mistakes in his writing. Yet it is obvious from our experience that this is unlikely to produce the desired effect. The composition instructor is advised to exercise leniency for what appears to be a never-ending stream of errors in students' compositions.

The composition teacher should not act like a judge in a court who gives a verdict on an act of wrongdoing. As teachers tend to be more permissive about errors in students' speech, they should also be more lenient about errors in written language. Errors, when they appear either in spoken or written form, are not only inevitable, but also a natural part of learning a language. We should accept the fact that they will occur–and they should be allowed to occur–both in speech and writing (Byrne, 1979). Our experience shows, in fact, that errors never cease to appear at any stage of language learning. A certain error may disappear; but on the other hand, a new one will surface as the learner advances from one developmental stage to

another. Some errors may fossilize, bound to reappear under certain circumstances, such as extreme fatigue or relaxation.

It is important that correction take place as soon as possible, preferably immediately after the completion of a writing task. Having finished writing, students are ready to accept feedback and are more attentive to suggestions put forward either by the teacher or other students. If, however, the student's paper is returned in the next class meeting a week later, it will most likely be given a brief and dispirited look before being thrown into a wastebasket.

For immediate feedback, procedures need to be devised for self- or peer-correction. Self-correction, and rewriting of one's own paper, should be made an integral part of the composition program, for it is claimed that one learns to write well only through careful processes of editing and revising one's own paper. The following procedures for peer-correction are recommended by Witbeck (1976: 326):

1. Immediately on completion of writing, students are put in pairs and given a paper written by a third student. Thus, half the papers are still held by the teacher.
2. A short discussion of what to look for or of special grammar points is useful.
3. Students are told to work together making suggestions for improving the paper and to put their names on it.
4. As each pair finishes, they are given a second paper to work on. Faster pairs are given a third to allow other pairs time to finish the first.
5. When all the papers have been looked at, they are returned to the writers for revision. The students are encouraged to revise rather than expand and they are free to consult with the correctors or with the teacher. If time does not allow correction of all the papers, they may be completed by the teacher or the writers themselves outside of class.
6. Either both versions or only the second version is collected.

Integrated Activities

The general tendency at Japanese schools and colleges is that the label of a course dictates what takes place in it. In a class designated as "reading English," for example, the teacher would content himself by teaching only reading and refuse to go any further than that, often resulting in the boring deciphering of a written text.

My contention is that the instructor must free himself from the stereotyped notion that a language may be broken into several parts and be treated as such in his teaching situation. The integrated method–one in which all four basic language skills are given balanced, if not completely equal, attention–has proven to be far more efficient and effective (Searfoss, et al., 1981: 383) and provides a learning environment far closer to the real language situation outside the classroom.

In the present discussion of the composition course, I would therefore like to emphasize that a variety of integrated activities be employed in the writing program. Some activities will be introduced below.

Read/Mini-Lecture/Summary

In his presentation at the 1981 Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT) Annual Conference, Nicholas Teele explained his method for integrating listening, reading, and writing activities. Students will be engaged in quick reading of a short passage, summary writing, note-taking while listening to a lecture, and working in pairs or in a group. The procedures are as follows: First, the students read a 200-word passage for a couple of minutes. After the two minutes are up, they turn the copy over and write a summary on the back of the paper. Writing on the back of the paper facilitates writing from memory. Then the teacher gives a short, informal lecture which is an expanded version of the 200-word written text. Use of visual aids, such as a chalkboard, pictures or photos, flash cards, or posters is recommended. The students take notes while listening to the lecture, and upon the completion of the lecture they begin to produce a summary of the expanded version given by the teacher. If the physical setup of the classroom allows, the students may form small groups to work together. The summaries may be collected at the end of the class period or assigned as homework to be completed and returned to the teacher at the next class meeting. Teele reports that he has found texts from an English reader used in the second year of a Japanese junior high school (the eighth grade) to be the right level for this exercise.

Rewriting

First, topics are solicited from the entire class and are written on the blackboard. The students may have some difficulty, especial-

ly at the beginning of the course, in finding appropriate topics. Give a suggestion or hint one week in advance to help them think up a topic of common interest. Encourage them to read English-language newspapers, discuss issues with friends, or do research at the university library.

From the topics solicited, the students then choose one which they feel will be interesting to write about. A number of questions are asked in English about the topic either by the teacher or by students. An exchange of questions and answers is taken down both on the blackboard and in the students' notebooks. This discussion leads the class to a rough outline.

The students are now ready to start writing a 200-word essay. It is important that the writing be started immediately after the class discussion, even though it will have to be completed at home. Starting to write in class is intended to help the students when they resume their writing work at home. Presumably, they will find it easier to continue to work from their half-written paper instead of beginning with a blank sheet of paper in front of them.

In the next class meeting, the students are handed a copy of the teacher's model which the teacher has prepared beforehand. A large sheet of paper must be used for this writing task so that the teacher's model is written on the top half of the paper and the students will be able to write their second draft in the lower half of it. The students then compare their original composition with the model and rewrite it in the lower half of the sheet, borrowing expressions and ideas from the model. Both the original and the revised copies will be collected at the end of the class period. Two class sessions are needed if this procedure is followed (Hasegawa, 1978: 112).

Dictation

In spite of some criticism which we occasionally hear about the use of dictation in the foreign language class, the dictation technique should remain important as a classroom activity. By combining listening and writing, dictation gives variety to the classroom. Variety, as Speer strongly suggests (1980: 28), is "an essential quality of excellent language teaching, especially of ESL/EFL."

Pre-assigned dictation. The passage to be used for dictation may be pre-assigned or referred to in advance so that the students can work intensively on the grammatical structures and vocabulary of the passage before they come to class. When employed on a regular basis, the technique helps keep up the class morale.

Dictation-Composition. A combined effect of careful listening and composition may be expected in this exercise. Unlike the regular procedure, the students listen to the entire text a number of times without stopping, and then start writing totally from memory. With beginning students, some key words and expressions may be written on the blackboard. To the extent that the students reproduce the original, they are writing a dictation. To the extent that they must use their own words to fill memory gaps, they are writing something akin to a composition (Speer, 1980: 28–30).

To help them grasp the content of their listening material, the teacher may start off with a warm-up introduction by asking a few general questions about the passage. Then the passage is read aloud in its entirety several times. Outlines and some key vocabulary words may be supplied depending on the level of the class. The students try to reproduce the story as accurately as possible, using the identical words and constructions as far as they are able to and filling in with their own words only when their memory of the dictation-composition falters. Their papers are exchanged with other students and corrected by them, and collected with both the name of the writer and that of the corrector.

This technique may be used in the cloze procedure. Students are given the text which they have already studied but in which some strategic items have been deleted. Some die-hard student errors, such as definite and indefinite articles, may be dealt with here.

Writing a speech

Speech writing is a form of creative composition and should be treated as such in the college composition program. In essence, it is not different from writing an essay, which supposedly is our aim in the composition class. Teele (1981) says that when we write a speech we must follow the same procedures of writing as we do when we write a composition; that is, we must state the purpose of writing clearly at the beginning and always have in mind the audience. The student should be reminded that the guidepost of good writing is clarity, both in speech and essay writing. For that purpose, the student is advised to read aloud and tape-record his manuscript so that when he tries to revise it he will be able to pay more attention to the choice of words, the flow of thoughts, and the general organization of his draft.

In practice, the student is told to submit an outline of his speech with title, introduction, body, and conclusion. Instruction must be given as to how to make a good outline. The teacher should assign other students some tasks such as introducing speakers and their speeches, taking notes and making summaries of speeches, and asking the speaker (and for that matter, other members of the audience) some questions in English. Meloni and Thompson (1980: 508) use a student evaluation form to be filled in by other students. The students then have to listen more carefully in order to evaluate a speech by their fellow student.

Student Evaluation Form
(revised after the form given by Meloni and Thompson)

Speaker: _____
Title: _____

1. Was it easy to understand?
   _____ Yes, it was very easy.
   _____ Somewhat easy.
   _____ No, it was very difficult.
2. This speech was:
   _____ very interesting.
   _____ somewhat interesting.
   _____ boring.
   _____ very boring.
3. What is the main idea of the speech?
   _____
   _____
4. What are the speaker's strong and weak points?

	strong	weak
pronunciation	_____	_____
grammar	_____	_____
eye contact	_____	_____
preparation	_____	_____
visuals	_____	_____

5. What did you like best about this speech?
   _____
   _____
6. What grade would you give the speaker?
   A B C D F

Feedback in English

Class interaction in a college class tends to be teacher-dominated, one-way communication. To alleviate the problem, the teacher must have periodic feedback from his students. Although it may be carried out either in Japanese or English, feedback in English is recommended. Students will be given a chance to voice grievances, make suggestions, express satisfaction in the course, or put down just about anything which they feel like writing at the moment. The following procedures are recommended:

1. Give the students ten to fifteen minutes at the end of a class period, and encourage them to write anything that happens to come up in their minds.
2. Collect the papers. Put down a few comments. The comments are your personal reactions to what the students say in their papers.
3. Make photocopies of the papers and return only the originals.
4. Keep the photocopies for future reference, and occasionally read some of them to the class.

Letter writing

Letter writing should play a more important part in our composition class. For one thing, there always is a purpose in writing a letter, which is a crucial teaching point as I have mentioned earlier. Also, writing informal, but not sloppy, letters provides the students with an opportunity to express their feelings and emotions—another valuable teaching point to prepare our students for life outside the classroom. In writing social letters, students must be encouraged to write and think in terms of "I" and "you." Since the Japanese attitude toward the self and toward personal relationships is different from that of English-speaking peoples, these seemingly basic concepts might pose some difficulty.

For the sake of practice, students may write to the following persons:

1. To their own teacher, either in the form of classroom feedback or simply as a social letter.
2. To other students, who may in turn write back.
3. To their imaginary friend: movie star, future husband or wife, etc.
4. To the personified "English." Students write a letter to

"English," just as they would write to a friend, expressing their frustration, grievances, appreciation, or affection. The teacher must see that they understand what the personified English is and how they should write to him/her (Pellettiri, 1981: 40–41).

Conclusion

In this article, I have attempted to show that there is a great deal of sense in teaching our students to write in English, not because "it is there," as the mountain climber would say, but because learning to write in the foreign language is an essential part of balanced language learning. I have also made some suggestions as to planning a writing program, developing rhetorical skills in composition, and correcting papers. A number of integrated activities which may be applicable in other teaching situations have also been introduced. I hope this article will prove to be of some interest to my fellow teachers.

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Reading, Writing, and Culture Shock

Louise Damen

In his book *Principles of Language Learning*, H. Douglas Brown suggests that language teachers "could benefit from a careful assessment of the current cultural stages of learners with due attention to possible optimal periods for language mastery" (1980: 139). In particular, he proposes that there might be a "cultural 'critical' period" which spans the stressful period of acculturation, often known as culture shock, and the following period of accommodation or recovery (138–39). This stage in the acculturation process would be the optimal period for mastery of the new language.

This article will explore the implications of Brown's hypothesis concerning the role of culture shock in language acquisition. It will be suggested that the phenomenon of culture shock can serve as a positive force in a second language classroom and that the use of the "silent" channels of reading and writing can provide sheltered communicative modes which lend themselves admirably to the development of cross-cultural awareness and adjustment on the learner's own terms.

Although Brown's hypothesis was limited to the context of second language learning in a second culture and culture shock has often been regarded as an experience limited to such a context, there is evidence that culture shock does not stop at the classroom door and its painful effects are not limited to a sojourn in a foreign country. Culture change and acculturation are universal experiences of modern life and occur worldwide. The increasing tempo of change and the lengthening of the life span force acculturation on all of us.

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Thus, learning how to learn a new culture through the acquisition of cross-cultural awareness and intercultural communicative skills as proposed in this paper will serve our students both as language learners and as individuals. Culture learning can bridge the great chasm which often yawns over cultural differences and produces severe culture shock. It can also contribute to personal growth and serve as a lifelong skill to be practiced in our changing world. Although we would not advise the deliberate fostering of culture shock, even in small doses as Nostrand (1966) suggested, we do propose that culture learning, as a process, should be a goal in every language learning context.

Culture Shock

The phenomenon known as culture shock, first described by Oberg (1960), has an undeservedly bad name. Oberg, and others who followed him (Clarke, 1976; Bateson, 1972; and Foster, 1962), have defined culture shock as an illness with a set of recognizable symptoms and a cure. Some have considered it a form of anxiety resulting from removal of familiar cues as well as supportive and well-understood cultural patterns (Hall, 1959: 156). Others have considered culture shock as "mental illness" (Foster, 1962: 87) or even a form of schizophrenia (Bateson, 1972: 211; Clarke, 1976: 381). Yet others (Adler, 1975; Bennett, 1977) regard culture shock as a subcategory of transition experiences which occur with life changes. As Adler states:

> Although culture shock is most often associated with negative consequences, it can be an important aspect of cultural learning, self-development, and personal growth. . . . The problems and frustrations encountered in the culture shock process are important to an understanding of change and movement experiences. . . . Such transitional experiences can be the source of higher levels of personality development. (14)

Bennett concludes that the "mere idea that culture shock is not an alien feeling can give us the confidence that we have the ability to resolve it comfortably" (46). Thus, culture shock as a learning experience becomes a more welcome element in our classrooms. Further, the transitional experience has been seen as a movement from a "low state of self and cultural awareness to a higher state of both" (Adler, 1975: 15). Adler continues: "The transitional experi-

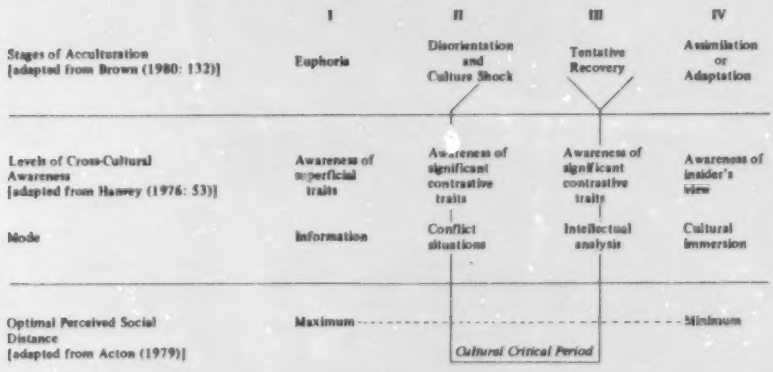
ence begins with the encounter of another culture and evolves into the encounter with self" (18). As such, it becomes a natural, normal, repeated, and individualized process.

Stages of Acculturation and Levels of Cross-Cultural Awareness

Various authors have defined the stages involved in culture change or learning of a new culture. Gregory Trifonovitch (1977) identified the honeymoon stage, the hostility stage, the humor stage, and the home stage. Adler discusses five stages: contact, disintegration, reintegration, autonomy, and independence, each with accompanying emotional states, perspectives, behavior, and interpretation (19). Brown collapses these into four stages: euphoria, culture shock, recovery, and assimilation (or adaptation) (132). Progress through these stages is not necessarily straightforward and depends upon the individual (see Gullahorn and Gullahorn, 1963; Lysgaard, 1955).

Each of these stages represents the reactions of the sojourner to contact with the new culture and may be related to levels of cross-cultural awareness as identified by Hanvey (1976). (See Figure 1.) These levels range from awareness of superficial traits or stereotypes, followed by awareness of significant highly contrastive traits, first as conflicting patterns, and then as believable in terms of the new culture (cultural relativity), and finally, to awareness of cultural

Figure 1: Acculturation and Language Learning[1]



[1] This figure has been devised for heuristic purposes to aid in the following discussion. It does not contain the complete information of the original works cited.

traits from an insider's view (empathy). Hanvey concludes that Level III is more attainable than Level IV, "and this is a reasonably worthy goal" (53).

The Cultural Critical Hypothesis

The cultural critical period, as hypothesized by Brown, recognizes the close relationship between stages of culture change and language mastery. The research of Lambert (1967) had suggested that mastery of a second language within a second culture occurred early in the third stage of acculturation at a period of disorientation or anomie. Brown combined this finding with Acton's (1979) theory of "perceived social distance" to form his hypothesis. Acton had suggested that an individual's perception of the relationship (i.e. the "distance") between his own culture and the target culture affected his ability to learn the second language. Acton's theory stated that there is an "optimal perceived social distance" that marks a "good" language learner. Brown thus reasoned:

> The implication of such a hypothesis is that mastery might not effectively occur before that stage, or even more likely, that the learner might never be successful in his mastery of the language if he has proceeded beyond early Stage 3 without accomplishing that linguistic mastery. Stage 3 may provide not only the optimal *distance*, but the optimal cognitive and affective tension to produce the necessary *pressure* to acquire the language, yet pressure that is neither too overwhelming (such as that which may be typical of Stage 2 or culture shock) nor too weak (Stage 4). Language mastery at Stage 3, in turn, would appear to be an instrument for progressing psychologically through Stage 3 and finally into Stage 4. (138-39)

Brown then is suggesting a "culturally based *critical period*" that is independent of the age of the learner (139). The further implication of the Brown hypothesis–that uneven development in either linguistic or cultural development is an undesirable outcome –is also significant. We have long known that affective variables are important in language learning (Gardner and Lambert, 1972; Guiora et al., 1972; Stevick, 1976); the practicing language teacher can no longer ignore the personal reactions of the language learner to the target culture. Thus, if we can agree with the assumption that culture learning/adjustment and language mastery must go hand in hand if successful language mastery is to be achieved, then

nature of culture shock and culture learning must be taken into consideration in any language learning context.

Culture Learning and Training

Stewart identifies three kinds of learning which may result from successful passage through a period of culture shock: knowledge of another culture, knowledge of one's own culture, and knowledge of self (1977: 28). This learning then is the concern of the classroom teacher. Brown suggests that the teacher should assist the learner through the second stage (culture shock), allow the feelings of anger and depression to be expressed, and help the student "gradually emerge from those depths to a very powerful and personal form of learning" (135).

Before we consider how these words of advice might be put into practice, it is necessary to comment briefly upon the nature of culture learning and how it differs from language learning.

Culture is generally defined as shared patterns of living, thinking, and believing. Like language, it is systematic and the two systems—culture and language—are very closely interrelated. Indeed, language serves as the channel for culture learning. As Casson states: "Language and culture are not independent or mutually exclusive cognitive systems. . . . Culture is a wider system that completely includes language as a subsystem. . . . The relation of language to culture is a relation of the part to the whole" (19).

Thus, a cultural system is vastly more complex and comprehensive than a given linguistic system. In addition, cultural systems are paradoxical in that they encompass and continue beyond individual experience, yet they can only be observed and practiced by the individual, so that culture is at once both shared patterns and the individual's interpretation of those patterns (Keesing, 1974: 89).

For the most part, the process of acculturation tends to be individualized: the individual selects and evaluates the cultural traits to be learned. A person may achieve a cultural competence which is highly idiosyncratic and, as Paulston (1978) points out, "shows nowhere near the same conformity between individuals as does linguistic competence" (369). Thus, culture training must be offered in a manner which allows for the greatest opportunity for selectivity and evaluation on the part of the learner. Such an approach permits the teacher to serve a wide range of students from various cultural backgrounds and with a diversity of learning goals. At the

same time it allows the success of the process of cultural change to be measured by the cultural traveller.

Guided Cultural Discovery in the Silent Mode

Guided cultural discovery rather than packaged cultural content should be the main focus of cultural instruction, especially for students who may face severe culture shock. The techniques of guided cultural discovery are similar to those which might be used by an anthropologist in surveying a new culture. The process emphasizes observation, comparison, contrast, and evaluation both in terms of the native culture and the target culture. It is self-paced and allows for the recognition of the stages of cultural awareness and change reached by the individual student, as Brown has suggested. It takes into account the need to encourage culture as well as language learning and leaves the matter of adjustment to the learner. In effect, it stresses the *process* of learning a new culture. Finally, because the process of acculturation remains highly internalized and personal, even though it is practiced in public, the silent channels of reading and writing serve well to guide the learner in acquiring the culture learning skills which then may be practiced on the "public" channels of speaking and responding.

Role playing, simulation, discussions, field trips, and other techniques which open the way for cultural observation are familiar and useful devices. Get-togethers with native speakers and parties have their place, but there is heavy concentration on the vocal channels. These activities are very often unproductive and painful for students whose oral skills are inadequate. It is just these students, especially the Japanese, who suffer the greatest degree of culture shock and are least able to enter the cultural learning cycle. They are almost literally struck dumb. Part of their shock lies in their inability to deal with the communication styles of English. Their frustration, which is both linguistically and culturally bound, often locks them in a stage of cultural change marked by anger, depression, and suspicion—a state which may well pass unnoticed by the teacher who is not adept at reading the very subtle signals which are being transmitted. Even those students whose oral skills are sufficient to support intercultural exchange may not wish to express their feelings and frustrations openly. The teacher must learn to "read between the lines."

Therefore, it is the thesis of the following discussion that the judicious use of carefully constructed reading and writing activities –even in situations in which they would not ordinarily be used– can assist the learner in coping with particularly difficult periods of change, assist the teacher in evaluating student progress, and provide the basis for continued culture learning.

Aiding and Abetting Culture Learning

Kleinjans (1972) fashioned a framework to probe into the nature of culture learning and establish a means of evaluating the progress of the teaching/learning process. He proposed a matrix of three domains, each with five levels. The three domains are cognition, affection, and action. The domain of cognition ranges from information, through analysis, synthesis, comprehension, and insight. Affection commences with perception, then proceeds through appreciation, reevaluation, orientation, and identification. Action begins with awareness, and continues through attending, responding, acting, and interacting (20). In Kleinjans' matrix each level presupposes passage through the lower levels. As he states: "It is unlikely, and probably undesirable, that a person will be able to reach the profoundest level in each domain" (24). However, the first three levels of each domain can be addressed in the classroom context, if all three domains are considered.

In the following discussion, assignments which encourage and enhance cultural development in second language classrooms in a host culture are reviewed. Similar activities can be undertaken in cultures other than the host culture, either as preparation for sojourn in another country or as exercises in developing culture learning skills. The process of culture learning–observation, comparison, contrast, and evaluation–is universal.

The general objectives for culture learning include assisting the student to:

1. Become less ethnocentric by bringing his or her own cultural givens and patterns to a conscious level;
2. Understand the target cultural givens and patterns;
3. Assess the cultural chasm which lies between;
4. Build a personal cultural bridge across that chasm.

Before considering the means by which such training can be integrated with traditional language instruction, it is important to repeat that each student travels a private road both in learning a

language and a culture. We often find that a first stage level of culture change is being experienced by an advanced language student. In these cases, it is extremely important to bring the linguistic and cultural processes into synchronization as quickly as possible.

Step One: Getting to Know "My World"

Step One in the development of cross-cultural awareness is ideally undertaken when the student is either in a euphoric state or has not yet been introduced to the new or target culture. This step involves identification of areas in which cultures may exhibit differences. It may include the target culture, but it is not necessary that it do so. Areas covered may be education, family life, aspirations, or women's rights. This is not the place for the teacher to introduce content specifically related to the target culture.

Reading and writing assignments can provide the vocabulary and focus needed. Writing assignments should call for exploration and description by the students of their own cultures. Assignments such as "Describe a Classroom in Your Country" or "My Favorite Food" may seem prosaic, but they are culturally loaded. They help bring native cultural patterns into the conscious level. Even if the student has advanced to the acculturative stage of disorientation or culture shock, the revisiting of the familiar and "right" can be very comforting and reassuring.

As Hanvey's analysis of the levels of cross-cultural awareness implies, the cultural traits dealt with at this stage are usually very visible; many would be considered exotic and strange to those who do not share them. Thus, the recognition of cultural differences, if handled with care, can provide other members of the class with insights into contrastive traits. Our students often tell us that they are interested in learning about the cultural patterns of their classmates; such interest should be nurtured. It is in this step that natural curiosity both for the native and target culture can be encouraged.

The use of journals and diaries are often very helpful in developing a basis for cross-cultural comparisons. It is especially useful for the foreign student who often has little or no contact with the native population and is baffled, although intrigued, by the new world. Journals may be shared with the teacher so that contact mysteries and problems can be discussed. Also, journals may well be the only channel for expressing doubts, fears, and confusions.

For example, one might receive a communication such as the following which revealed the efforts of one student at the beginning of his sojourn:

A

> I have lived in Tampa since June 17th '81. First, surprised this climate, so sultry. That was hard to work something. I have traveled the "Bush Garden" once with American. That was a nice traveling. All over the ground is covered with grass. U.S.A. I like it best.
>
> I live in the Fontana Hall which is near U.S.F. Sometimes I am boring of loud music from the other room. A loud music is nervous for me. I think most American like loud music, but most Asian don't like too loud music. But now I am accustomed with that music more. I like to talk with my roommate. I like American custom, too. [1]

Assignments which call for reading about specific cultural patterns (but not necessarily those of the target culture), such as greetings, family organization, or education, can be followed by writing assignments which lead the student to examine his or her own native customs. The result may deal in stereotypes but it can also be highly informative, both for the teacher and the student, as shown in Essays B and C.

B

> The people of Bangladesh are the Bengalis. The Bengalis are simple, friendly, wayward, and pious. They are mostly swayed by emotion and enthusiasm. So, when they admire someone, they admire him with full heart and when hate someone, they hate him forever. The Bengalis sometimes have a stereotyped tendency.... Their distinct religion and cultural values sometimes circumscribe their attitude toward people of other culture, but they do respect others.

C

> In Japan, making a bow is popular way to exchange greetings. I believe Japanese is very polite people, but we don't exchange greetings the person who we don't know. In the U.S., they do to unknown people. They say "Hello" or "Hai." This is very unfamiliar for us. Recently, the way of making bow was Americanized especially among young people. But, formal way is still making a bow. In the family, that is not so common now, because the Japanese family is changing to core family, such as America's way;

[1] Like all other excerpts printed in this article, this passage has received only minimal correction.

> therefore, the respect toward the father and mother or older brother and sister is declining. But, I think, we should respect toward teacher. If I meet a former teacher, I'm going to make a bow to exchange greetings.
>
> In my case, even in the U.S. if I meet a foreign student who has different culture, I will make a bow. Actually, sometimes I did it. My American or foreign friends said that it was very strange. It is very important to learn other ways of greeting.

In each of the above cases the student is exhibiting different aspects of initial acculturative efforts. Thus, getting to know "my world" means understanding, or at least bringing to a conscious level, personal perceptions of native patterns and embarking upon the first attempts to compare these with variant cultural patterns. It is a time of curiosity, self-examination, and reaching out.

The appropriate reaction of the teacher can only be judged in the context of the communication. In general, journal entries may be simply read and returned, without comment, but the insights gained into the student's perceptions should not pass unnoticed. In some cases, reaction in terms of personal comment should be made. In other cases, problems of miscommunication or misunderstanding can be discussed at a later time and out of the context of the specific essay. In no case should grammatical correction be made except for clarification. The inclination to wield the red pencil, of course, is very great, but it is more important for the teacher to read between the lines of such essays than it is to provide corrections.

Step Two: Getting to Know "Them"

Step Two involves examination of components of the target culture. This examination may occur either at a conflict or intellectual analysis level (Stages 2 and 3). In the case of the latter, the teacher should be prepared for some unflattering, or even unfair, comments from student observers. It should be remembered that the process of learning is more important than cultural accuracy at this point.

Assignments which encourage discussion of observed target culture traits or patterns and/or their comparison with native patterns offer opportunities to analyze and synthesize (levels two and three in the Kleinjans model of the cognitive domain) and sharpen observational skills (level two in the affective domain). They certainly provide frames for discussion and personal reflection,

which should serve to promote learning in the third domain, action. At this level the teacher/guide must take care to learn as well and to refrain from criticizing students' observations. Unlike grammatical and linguistic errors, which can be corrected, cultural "errors" are of a different nature. The observations made on the cultural level are valid for each student at the time they are made. This does not mean, however, that it is inappropriate for the teacher to respond in a nonjudgmental way.

Step Two calls for writing assignments such as "My First Day in the United States," "Problems of Foreign Students in the United States," or "What I Have Learned about Americans," the last being only for the stout-hearted and culturally secure teacher. Reading assignments can provide appropriate vocabulary and culture-specific information in measured doses.

Excerpts from three essays follow. They demonstrate the type of response which might be expected in an advanced class.

D

I have learned three important things about Americans since I came to the United States. First, I have learned that all Americans are lively, they move and speek quickly . . . because time is very important to them. Second . . . Americans are the same as the machine, they do their work . . . worthily but without any thinking, they just use the instructions even if it is not completely right. Finally, they do not know anything except their job, they do not know what is happened in their country.

E

I have observed that Americans are polite, pragmatic, and organized. Wherever you are in the United States you can hear words of friendship and cordiality like, "May I help you?", "Excuse me," "Have a nice day," "Thank you," and many others. . . . Another characteristic is their pragmatism. Along years, Americans have worked a lot in order to create many devices which have made their life comfortable. These devices not only save time but they also make things easier. . . . Last, but never least, Americans are very organized. Perhaps, for the same fact that they are very pragmatic people, they have developed different ways or organization that assure them better services.

F

I have been learning about Americans since I came here last September. . . . First, Americans don't care what other people do

> or what happened. For example, when I came out of my room . . . my roommate never ask me where are you going or where I went. . . . Second, Americans are friendly and open minded. . . . When I went to my roommate's home, I was welcome by her family. Her mother said to me immediately: "Help yourself to everything in my home," and I was surprised to hear it. I thought that the words indicated friendliness. . . . In _____ . . . we never open refrigerators or use my friend's things without permission. Because to serve is a virtue in my country . . . . Third, Americans like cards. . . . Sometimes I can find cards are delivered to my American friends without special reasons. . . . As far as I look at Americans, they seem not to care what other people do as whole, while they think its important to keep relationships between them and their friends and them and their parents.

In Step Two learning, it is often appropriate to provide both cultural and grammatical guidance. Student D, who of course was suffering from a clear case of terminal run-on sentences, needed cultural as well as grammatical guidance. A teacher reading this essay in the mode of cultural role model might be tempted to set matters straight; a teacher serving as a cultural guide would be more concerned with encouraging and broadening the student's field of perception. It was pointed out privately to this student that the United States is very culturally diverse, more so than in his country, Saudi Arabia, so that while his observations were correct from his point of view, they should not be used to generalize too broadly. Similarly, Student E needed to be warned about the communicative differences between intentional politeness and leave-taking clichés.

Student F's observations reflected the limitations of the observational field—life in the dormitory—and the cultural values of the 18- to 23-year-old age group. What had been interpreted as "not caring" might simply have been a case of "doing your own thing," a modern version of the cultural taboo against putting your nose in someone else's business. The problem of the open door policy in connection with the American refrigerator touches cultural norms both in the United States and in Student F's country. She reflects some confusion as to how the invitation to "help yourself" should be interpreted. In doing so, she is moving into the middle levels of culture learning with contrast and comparison of cultural patterns. Her observation about the meaning of card sending was surprisingly sophisticated and reflected understanding of modern American family relationships.

Step Three: Same or Different?

This step calls for reading and writing assignments which allow for comparison of similarities and differences between the native and target cultures. The focus can be dictated by the needs of the individual students (businessmen, students, refugees, etc.), but the emphasis should be placed upon the recognition of contrastive cultural patterns.

At this stage it is important that the students be encouraged to seek out cultural information, either by library work, interviews, or personal observation, and move from the pattern of subjective evaluation to discovery of native perceptions, i.e., toward empathy. Studies of the educational systems in various countries, for example, can provide a means for the individual student to investigate the divergent patterns. Indeed, it is at this level that the student is able to handle a large amount of culture-specific data. All too often such materials are presented at early stages of acculturation when no native contrastive frame of reference has been established. Thus, the material presented is either considered boring, irrelevant, or both.

The following essay represents a Step Three learning response:

G

> In my opinion, it is difficult to say which concept of respect for tradition is better, but it is interesting to talk about the concept of respect for tradition in my country and in the United States, which is totally different.
>
> In my country, everyone knows that polite is the most important, and it is also the first thing taught in elementary school. Therefore, young people have to respect older people any way. For instance, before going out, the children have to be admitted by their parents or their older sisters, brothers, if their parents are not at home. And very politely when answer, question, or ask.
>
> In United States, on the other hand, because of having freedom and independent life, young people don't have to respect older people or even have to be admitted going out. And it is not required to be polite when asking, answering, or questioning.
>
> In short, every citizen has his good attitude.

This student, a refugee, is apparently determined to make the best of both worlds and to understand her new cultural milieu. It is at this point that the student must be encouraged to make an adjustment which is personally acceptable. The student is experiencing

culture shock and attempting to make an adjustment. The act of describing observations is the first step toward dealing with accommodation.

If the student is suffering from culture shock and is in a state of disorientation, then the act of expressing opinions, reactions, frustrations, and even emotions, like sorrow and anger, appears to require a reassessment of these states on the part of the writer. The teacher/reader who does not read merely for grammatical or rhetorical errors will be rewarded with a deeper understanding of the needs, interests, levels of adaptation, and concerns of the student/writer.

Step Four: Building Bridges

It is at this step that the student must pass the cultural critical period and bring some resolution to conflict, if it exists, or devise personal adjustments. The step can be undertaken when sufficient interest, confidence, and spirit of inquiry pervades the classroom so that students ask what they want to know, write about what they feel without fear of ridicule or rejection, and dare to reach out and ask. That stage had been reached in an advanced reading and writing class when the students and teacher spent two hours writing, talking, and questioning each other about the cultural baggage we all attach to the universal *rite de passage*—dying. The teacher learned as much as the students.

That day did not happen by accident. It was the culmination of many weeks of encouragement to make cultural comparison and to understand another culture. It was at that point that the teacher could begin to feel that the students were ready to continue their voyages of discovery, not unassisted, but unguided. It was not likely that this stage of independence could have been attained without tuning in to the "silent" channels frequently.

Essay H is an example of a student who has learned her culture learning skills well.

H

> Since I came to U.S., I have heard South Americans talk about that the people in U.S. are cold. At same time, I used to hear North Americans talk about that European people are cold and unfriendly. I don't know about European people anyway. However, I don't think North Americans are cold and unfriendly. Of course, my roommate was American. She was very kind and helped me a lot. . . . I have been surprised at how many times American invite and

visit their friends, and how open-minded they are. I have also been feeling that American people don't care what other people are doing. This is sometimes good, sometimes bad. The reason South Americans feel North Americans are cold is the point that North Americans don't care. Even though North Americans have good friends (I mean of the same sex), the relationship is not so deep. This idea is based on the idea they don't care what other people are doing. On the contrary, South Americans have a very profound relationship among themselves. They might feel uncomfortable when they see North Americans.

It is interesting to note that Essays F and H were written by the same student, a Japanese girl. However, Essay H was written several months after Essay F. This student appears to be well on her way to becoming a practiced cross-cultural observer. She might well have something to point out to the beleaguered diplomats who are now struggling with the cross-cultural problems of the Western hemisphere.

The last essay in this section was written by a student at the end of his intensive language course. It is a poignant description of his passage through the stages of acculturation and his struggle to achieve a satisfactory level of adaptation and cross-cultural awareness.

I

It was shining, I remember on the first day I went to _____. At this time I had just lived in the United States for five months and knew a little bit of English. It was so little that I even didn't know how to answer the simplest question; as a result, I was afraid to meet Americans.

I began to study at _____ in the Spring quarter. Frankly, I had a hard time during the quarter because of many things which I really didn't understand at that time. It was the first time I studied with foreigner. I didn't know how to open conversation and how to respond to my friends and my teachers alike. Of course, it was because of my English, but there was also something else, I felt, which prevented me from closing this distance; as a result, it put me in a state of isolation. I didn't have anybody to talk to and saw the school and classes as gloomy places.

And now there are three weeks left that I will leave this Center. I will not leave it with desperation but with a different sentiment from what I had before. No more am I afraid to meet Americans. No more do I feel uncomfortable. And no more do I hate going to

school. I am now ready to get into this new society in which I will spend many years ahead and will bring what my teachers have taught me as a key to a new life. I am having better acknowledge of English and the basic understanding of culture and culture shock. . . .

A Lesson for the Teacher

This article has been mainly concerned with the need to guide our students in the art of cultural discovery. The role of the teacher is vital in this process and culturally sensitive reading between the lines is a skill which the teacher must develop and practice.

Excerpts from two student essays follow. They were written by advanced language students in the same class. They provide a means to revisit the cultural critical hypothesis and may serve as a self-administered, read-between-the-lines test for readers. After reading these excerpts, consider the following questions: What stage of cultural "mastery" has each student reached? How should the teacher/reader react to such content?

J

. . . In _____, it is said that Americans are cold/distant. This means that they do not express their feelings openly; and to a greater extent that they are not able to have those feelings as strong as we_____do. My particular observations of American behavior has shown me that in fact, Americans are distant. They are not likely to have many close friends . . . . I think there are several reasons for this . . . .

I think that the race has to do with this fact. It has been shown that certain abnormal patterns can be transmitted genetically. So, a paranoid man is very likely to have among his children a paranoid one. This same principle can be applied to members of the same race, which have more or less the same genotype; therefore, it is possible that such coldness can be genetically transmitted.

The second reason I am going to list is the fear of other people which Americans seem to have. They try not to get involved with strangers as a means to avoid being hurt. This behavior model is acquired during childhood at home.

The principal cause seems to be the American style of living. Americans try not to make very deep relationships because they do not live in the same place for many years. So without getting several beloved friends they can move away easily in emotional sense. They will not miss their friends because they do not get friends. . . .

K

> I have learned about America in books and periodicals . . . It is the first time that I realize, a little bit, what human right really is. The person here is regarded by the way he works and not what type of work he does. . . . No one hates another for his status. All are equal here and the law is the same for all. Every people can express his own ideas and opinion, even if it is going against authority.
>
> . . . Another thing I had in my mind before visiting this country was color discrimination. But I've looked around and I've found that browns, blacks, and whites are getting along well here. No scence of color discrimination has yet come in front of my eyes. . . .
>
> I must say that the ideas that I had in my country about America before arriving here were mixture of imagination and reality. Now it is only reality that points out my wrong ideas and gives me a clearer understanding about America. In fact, the new ideas that I am getting are pretty good.

What can be hypothesized about the stage of acculturation of each of these students? Student J, who is a Latin American, was exhibiting a stage of acculturation in which he had apparently formed a number of cultural generalizations and used the assignment to enumerate support for them. His perceived social distance, i.e., his perception of the relationship of his own culture to the target culture, had remained great and his essay indicated the extent of the boundaries he had placed on his intercultural contacts. If, as Acton suggests, the perceived social distance can affect the language learning situation, then this student was not likely to be making optimal progress in language learning as his distance was too great. This situation was confirmed by his generally disappointing performance in class and on examinations, his tendency to be disruptive, and his unwavering determination to do the least amount of work possible in order to pass the course. His observed out-of-class contacts were mainly confined to speakers of his native language. His goals were to become an engineer as quickly as possible and to return home again.

Clearly, the message which this essay conveyed was "leave me alone." A strong negative reaction from the teacher/reader to the use of stereotyping at best would have been rejected and at worst counter-productive. The student had been in the United States for more than a year; he was not in a primary stage of culture shock. It

would appear that his case presents evidence in support of the critical period hypothesis.

While his cultural adaptation remained low during the term, he did react positively to discussions of the value of balanced evidence and the risk of simplistic cause-and-effect statements, especially in the context of sociological conclusions. As his belligerence cooled, his language learning improved and so did that of his classmates.

The last student, newly arrived from the Far East and visibly different from the Americans surrounding him, composed his essay in the white heat of the euphoric "streets of gold" first stage of acculturation. Before arriving in the United States, his fears had been great; now they appeared to be ill-founded, and his relief quickly reached the same level as his former fears. His language mastery, which placed him in an advanced level, far outstripped his cultural sophistication at this time. Thus, this wondering child was soon to enter the "real world," as yet disabused of his illusions and likely doomed for some bitter disappointments and reinstatement of his fears, i.e., severe case of culture shock. A discerning teacher was needed to read between the lines and to issue a word of caution.

Both students were reacting to cultural stresses. Each point of view was valid for that student at that time. The opportunity of dealing directly with cultural conclusions, fears, and perceptions in a concrete form—writing—brought these views into the consciousness of the writer and that of the teacher. An observant teacher might well have guessed what these stresses and perceptions might be for a given student. However, the use of the "silent" channels opens the door to enhanced understanding and learning.

Conclusion

Although scant attention has been given to the ethnic characteristics of the students, there are, of course, patterns and problems shared by different cultural groups which play an important part in language acquisition. Yet the temporary neutralization of such differences and the concentration upon the process—the *how*—of culture learning appears to be desirable in order to develop the specific skills needed to survive the cultural critical period and move forward into a satisfactory accommodation of these differences.

The techniques and strategies an individual teacher may use in dealing with cultural variables in the language learning context must be forged within the classroom itself and in a two-way communica-

tive mode between the teacher and the student or students. The ESL/EFL classroom may not be the ideal place to learn either a new language or a new culture; today, however, it is the frequent location of this learning. Given this situation, then, it has been argued in this paper that the teacher should be aware of the stages of cultural as well as linguistic mastery of the students in question, should tune in on the "silent" channels and, by careful reading, listen to what the students are writing.

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Getting Into Texts
Part Two: Coherence in English

Joe D. Palmer

The reader will recall from Part One of this article (*Cross Currents*, Spring 1983) an extensive discussion of *discourse* and *text*. Discourse was seen as an interchange in which participants use words in situations. The point was made that discourses are expounded as texts, and that texts have semantic structure. The term *cohesion* was introduced to account for the semantic relations that link sentences together with what has gone before in a text. The term *coherence* was reserved to refer to rhetorical devices that make a text situationally appropriate and effective.

Part One included a discussion of a short story from the comic strip "Broom Hilda" (reprinted below). The story was analyzed at some length in regard to its exhibiting a degree of textual cohesion while being rhetorically incoherent. However, its lack of rhetorical coherence was only briefly mentioned. The observation was made that every genre has its own discourse structure, and that a short story is expected to conform to the readers' learned expectations. That is, if we think of what we typically find when we read short stories, we are able to generalize about their structure. We expect to read a narrative, that is, events in a sequence; we expect conflict to develop; we expect action of some sort. We expect the conflict to result in a climax in which the force of the conflict is dissipated. And we expect the tying up of loose ends in the aftermath of the climax. These sorts of learned expectations are typical of the kinds of expectations we have for every genre of discourse, both written

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and spoken. As you will see, the short story from Broom Hilda fails to meet any of these expectations.

A SHORT STORY
from "Broom Hilda," by Russell Myers

> Once upon a time there was a lovely young princess who lived in a castle in a far-off mythical kingdom. The castle was designed by her uncle Hernando who was an architect in a nearby city. He was also a fine family man and was once an excellent swimmer. He competed against Johnny Weismuller many times during the late 1920's. This was the time of the great depression during which many huge fortunes were lost. Next door to Hernando's office was a tattoo parlor. Many of our country's brave young fighting men went there for tattoos of their mothers, Barney Google, and Eleanor Roosevelt. It was these same young men who displayed such courage on Bataan and Iwo Jima. The courage that made this country safe for you, me, our children, zoo animals and restoring old Hudsons as a hobby.

If we continue to specify more narrowly and carefully the expected features of a type of discourse, in this case a short story, we will eventually arrive at a specification of the context of the particular situation of the discourse. That is, if we look at the event in which the text is functioning, the purpose of the writer or speaker, the topic or subject of the text, the genre or rhetorical mode of the text, and the relationship between the writer and the reader, we will arrive at the *register*:

> The register is the set of meanings, the configuration of semantic patterns, that are typically drawn upon under the specified conditions, along with the words and structures that are used in the realization of these meanings. (Halliday and Hasan, 1976: 23)

Every register of discourse is expected to exhibit qualities of *order*, *unity*, and *emphasis*. We know what to expect quite unconsciously because of our previous experience with similar discourses. Any deviation in the text from what we expect must be treated as having a cause and an effect. The cause may be a lack of sophistication on the writer's part. Or it may be that the writer is trying for a comic or poetic effect. Our judgments are based on our knowledge of register.

Now, the fairy tale from Broom Hilda is an example of a particular register. In this register we expect *order*. Since our primary

sense datum is the physical world, we use our experience of physical things in their relations to each other (i.e. space order) to imagine the sequence of events that we call time order. If I should ask you to tell me what you did last summer, your first thought would probably be a mental picture of a physical place, say, for example, the view of Mt. Fuji from the Shinkansen. From that physical point you could then narratize a sequence of events in time. And then from that narrative of physical events in time, you could jump back to other physical events that occurred before the first mental picture that you remembered. Thus, space order and time order are essential to any storytelling and consequently to any description that involves time.

We also expect a fairy tale to exhibit the quality of *unity*. It should be about something. It should have a beginning, a middle, and an end. And these should be related to each other both physically and temporally. The parts of the story between the words "Once upon a time . . . " and " . . . lived happily ever after" should concern itself with the trials and tribulations of a lovable character, for example, a lovely young princess.

We expect *emphasis* in a fairy tale to show that certain qualities, actions, and consequences are more important than others. Such qualities as physical strength or faithfulness may thus be extolled as virtues by emphasizing them.

In light of these expectations, we can say that the fairy tale from Broom Hilda lacks the qualities of order, unity, and emphasis.

Topical Coherence

In order to understand these observations more fully, let us look at the organization of information in the story from Broom Hilda.

It is possible to regard all sentences as containing two parts, each of which carries information. The first part of a sentence, usually a phrase, can be called the *theme;* the rest of the sentence can be called the *rheme*. When a theme contains given information, or information that the reader already knows, it may be called the *topic* of the sentence. When the rheme contains new information, it may be called the *comment*.

Theme	Rheme
Given: Topic	New: Comment

When the theme does not contain given information, it is not a topic. When a rheme does not contain new information, it is not a comment.

We may divide each of the sentences of "A Short Story" into two parts like this:

theme	rheme
Once upon a time . . .	. . . there was a lovely young princess who lived in a castle in a far off mythical kingdom.

The topic or comment will center on the content words of the sentence, so it is not necessary to look at all of the words of each sentence. Therefore, we may diagram the first sentence this way:

theme	rheme
Once upon a time . . .	princess/castle/kingdom

The phrase "Once upon a time" always introduces the topic of a fairy tale. So the topic we expect is "princess." However, the topic "princess" does not occur in the theme of the next sentence. Instead the topic is "castle."

theme	rheme
castle . . .	designed/Hernando/architect/city

The topic is "castle" because it is *given* information from the rheme of the first sentence. In the next sentence, the topic changes again.

theme	rheme
He [Hernando] . . .	family man/swimmer

This state of affairs, except for the repetition of "he," continues until the sixth sentence, when a more serious break in the coherence occurs.

theme	rheme
Next door . . .	tattoo parlor

"Next door" is not even a topic, because there is no given information in it. A similar break occurs in the next sentence.

theme	rheme
men . . .	went for/tattoos/mothers/ Google/Roosevelt

"Men" is not given information and so cannot be the topic. At the end of the story, for comic effect the author manages to establish a strong topic by repeating the theme "men" as the topic of the next (and final) sentence. What appears to be the final sentence ("The courage . . . ") is not; it is a continuation of the preceding sentence joined to it by a period fault.

Let us outline this text in graphic form to see the lack of topical coherence.

Theme	Rheme
Once . . .	princess / castle / kingdom
castle	designed / Hernando / architect / city
He . . .	family man / swimmer
He . . .	compete against / Weismuller / 1920's
This . . .	time of depression / fortunes lost
Next door . . .	tattoo parlor
men . . .	went for / tattoos / mothers / Google / Roosevelt
men . . .	display courage / make safe

As we can see, the information in the story is disordered. The story lacks well-organized and meaningful content. It has no topical coherence.

Exposition and Narrative

In some kinds of text the topic is so ever present that it is taken for granted. Readers must not expect any development. There is no story. There is no argument. There is no logical structure in the text. Such a text is often an example of definition.

The following text (printed in two forms: Text 2a and Text 2b) is a piece of expository writing that pretends to define terms related to the topic of revolution. The text is amusing as a parody of a certain style of writing, and it is interesting as an example of a text that does not contain any discourse markers of the sort treated in Part One of this paper in the section on conjunctive cohesion. Perhaps the thematic unity or topical coherence is so strong in this text that the discourse markers may be left out. In any event, the author did not put them in, and in leaving them out he created a parody of a style of writing that is somewhat inhumanly objective.

Now, just for fun, try to determine whether Text 2a or Text 2b is the original. One of the texts has been rewritten with the sentences in a random order. When you have made up your mind, try to determine how the cohesion devices in the text helped you decide which text is the original.

A BRIEF, YET HELPFUL, GUIDE TO CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Text 2a

In perpetrating a revolution, there are two requirements: someone or something to revolt against and someone to actually show up and do the revolting. Their job is to maintain the "status quo," a condition where everything remains the same although they may be willing to paint every two years. Opinions critical of the government are not tolerated, particularly about their dancing. The people or parties revolted against are called the "oppressors" and are easily recognized as they seem to be the ones having all the fun. The groups who revolt are called the "oppressed" and can generally be seen milling about and grumbling or claiming to have headaches. When the "oppressors" become too strict, we have what is known as a police state, wherein all dissent is forbidden, as is chuckling, showing up in a bow tie, or referring to the mayor as "Fats." Dress is usually casual and both parties may be flexible about time and place but if either faction fails to attend, the whole enterprise is likely to come off badly. (It should be noted that the oppressors never revolt and attempt to become the oppressed as that would entail a change of underwear.) Civil liberties are greatly curtailed in a police state, and freedom of speech is unheard of, although one is allowed to mime to a record. The "oppressors" generally get to wear suits, own land, and play their radios late at night without being yelled at. Freedom of the press is also curtailed and the ruling party "manages" the news, permitting the citizens to hear only acceptable political ideas and ball scores that will not cause unrest. In the Chinese Revolution of 1650 neither party showed up and the deposit on the hall was forfeited.

Text 2b

In perpetrating a revolution, there are two requirements: someone or something to revolt against and someone to actually show up and do the revolting. Dress is usually casual and both parties may

be flexible about time and place but if either faction fails to attend, the whole enterprise is likely to come off badly. In the Chinese Revolution of 1650 neither party showed up and the deposit on the hall was forfeited. The people or parties revolted against are called the "oppressors" and are easily recognized as they seem to be the ones having all the fun. The "oppressors" generally get to wear suits, own land, and play their radios late at night without being yelled at. Their job is to maintain the "status quo," a condition where everything remains the same although they may be willing to paint every two years. When the "oppressors" become too strict, we have what is known as a police state, wherein all dissent is forbidden, as is chuckling, showing up in a bow tie, or referring to the mayor as "Fats." Civil liberties are greatly curtailed in a police state, and freedom of speech is unheard of, although one is allowed to mime to a record. Opinions critical of the government are not tolerated, particularly about their dancing. Freedom of the press is also curtailed and the ruling party "manages" the news, permitting the citizens to hear only acceptable political ideas and ball scores that will not cause unrest. The groups who revolt are called the "oppressed" and can generally be seen milling about and grumbling or claiming to have headaches. (It should be noted that the oppressors never revolt and attempt to become the oppressed as that would entail a change of underwear.)

(Texts adapted from Allen, 1975. Text 2b is the original.)

The following narrative text also appears in two forms. As you read these texts, you will see that narration is much more dependent upon time sequence than is exposition. Text 3a describes a sequence of events which, when presented in a random order, do not make much sense. Text 3b, on the other hand, is the original text as written. It is easy to read because the sequence is relatively predictable in a way that makes it semantically transparent.

MAERA

Text 3a

Maera lay still, his head on his arms, his face in the sand. The others stood around. Then it got larger and larger and larger and then smaller and smaller. He had to stop and wash his hands. Someone had the bull by the tail. Sometimes the bull only bumped him with his head. Then everything commenced to run faster and faster as when they speed up a cinematograph film. Then the bull was gone. There was a great shouting going on in the grandstand over-

head. Some men picked Maera up and started to run with him toward the barriers through the gate out the passageway around under the grandstand to the infirmary. Each time he felt the horn coming. They laid Maera down on a cot and one of the men went out for the doctor. Then he was dead. Once the horn went all the way through him and he felt it go into the sand. The doctor came running from the corral where he had been sewing up picador horses. They were swearing at him and flopping the cape in his face. Maera felt everything getting larger and larger and then smaller and smaller.

Text 3b

Maera lay still, his head on his arms, his face in the sand. He felt warm and sticky from the bleeding. Each time he felt the horn coming. Sometimes the bull only bumped him with his head. Once the horn went all the way through him and he felt it go into the sand. Someone had the bull by the tail. They were swearing at him and flopping the cape in his face. Then the bull was gone. Some men picked Maera up and started to run with him toward the barriers through the gate out the passageway around under the grandstand to the infirmary. They laid Maera down on a cot and one of the men went out for the doctor. The others stood around. The doctor came running from the corral where he had been sewing up picador horses. He had to stop and wash his hands. There was a great shouting going on in the grandstand overhead. Maera felt everything getting larger and larger and then smaller and smaller. Then it got larger and larger and larger and then smaller and smaller. Then everything commenced to run faster and faster as when they speed up a cinematograph film. Then he was dead.

(Texts adapted from Hemingway, 1961)

As is made obvious here, our own expectations and assumptions about a logical sequence of events in time is a powerful influence on our understanding of narration. *Techniques:* Arrange the sentences of a text in random order, numbering each sentence. Give the students the task of reordering the sentences and then defending their work in class. If the text is a narrative, the students will generally agree on the correct sequence of sentences. If the text is an exposition, on the other hand, the sequence of sentences will be found to be more arbitrary and open to argument. Often one sequence will seem to be as reasonable as another. If this situation is encountered, one recourse is to have the students insert sentence connectors between the contiguous pairs. This practice will often

resolve the argument as to the best sequence of sentences. However, in some expository texts, almost any order of sentences makes sense, as you will see in Text 4.

Rhetorical Techniques

As we have seen, written discourses can be divided into two basic types: narration and exposition. A narrative has as its purpose the recounting of real or imaginary events, and relies heavily upon time sequence. For this reason, it is not difficult to recognize when the sentences of a narrative are presented out of order, or to restore the original order. In contrast, expository texts (definition, classification, and description) are less dependent upon time order for their meaning and organization. Exposition relies on a wider range of rhetorical techniques, including the following:

1. time order:	having to do with sequence
2. space order:	having to do with dimensions, spatial domain
3. causality:	relationship between a cause and its effect
4. result:	the effect of something, consequence, solution, end
5. comparison:	seeing things together in order to find differences and similarities
6. contrast:	opposition, antithesis
7. analogy:	imaginary resemblance, association, relation
8. exemplification:	illustration, confirmation, precise example

Much work has been done to attempt to describe the various rhetorical techniques. (See Marder, 1960; Horn, 1971; Allen and Widdowson, 1974; and Selinker, Trimble and Trimble, 1976.)

Let us now look at an expository text performing the general function of description:

Text 4

It was the rainy season in Bangkok. The air was saturated with a continuous fine drizzle, and often drops of rain would dance in a brilliant ray of sunlight. Rifts of blue were always visible here and there; and even when the clouds clustered most thickly round the sun, the sky at their circumference was dazzlingly blue. Before an approaching squall, it would turn ominously dark and threatening. A foreboding shade would shroud the predominantly green, low-roofed city dotted with palms.

The name of the city dates from the Ayutthaya dynasty, when it was first called *bang*, "town," *kok*, "olives," because of its many

> olive trees. Another ancient name is Krung Thep, or "City of Angles." The metropolis, situated less than six feet above sea level, is completely dependent on canals for transportation. When roads are constructed by piling up dirt, canals are inevitably created. And when ground is excavated in building a house, ponds immediately form. Such pools connect up naturally with streams; and thus these "canals" run in every direction, all flowing into the mother waters of the Menam, gleaming the same brown as that of the inhabitants' skin. (Mishima, 1973: 1)

A few phrases selected from this passage will show how a variety of rhetorical techniques are used in this description of Bangkok.

time order:	. . . rainy season . . .
	Before an approaching squall . . .
	. . . dates from the Ayutthaya dynasty . . .
	When roads are constructed . . .
	And when ground is excavated . . .
space order:	. . . drops of rain would dance . . .
	. . . when the clouds clustered . . .
	. . . six feet above sea level . . .
	. . . piling up dirt . . .
	. . . ground is excavated . . .
	. . . pools connect up . . .
	. . . canals run . . .
causality:	. . . approaching squall > turn . . . dark . . .
	"town" + "olives" > *bang + kok*
	roads > canals
	building a house > ponds
	. . . pools connect with streams > canals
comparison:	. . . same brown . . .
contrast:	rifts of blue ≠ clouds clustered
	dazzling blue ≠ foreboding shade
analogy:	. . . mother waters . . .
	. . . drops of rain would dance . . .

Techniques: The teacher writes the names of the specific rhetorical techniques on the board, or makes a permanent display on cardboard. The teacher uses a simple expository text to illustrate the

use of specific rhetorical techniques, and explains how a coherent rhetorical development (or argument) is obtained. Then the students analyze the text that they are reading in terms of the specific techniques. By doing so they demonstrate their understanding of the cohesion devices that tie the text together. It is useful to number the paragraphs of the text so that it becomes easier to talk about the parts of the text. In every case the teacher asks the students to explain what the author is doing with the text at every point. How does he construct this house of meaning, this "semantic edifice"?

This analysis of the rhetorical techniques used in the sample text is open to argument. There are probably more identifiable techniques used than are pointed out here. Nevertheless, my purpose is to show that general functions of a text are expounded through rhetorical techniques, and to suggest that an awareness of the existence of these techniques can help both student and teacher in improving reading skills.

Conclusion

There are many aspects of text that are available to the teacher. Many of these aspects are much more complex than words and sentence structure. We need to know more about the semantic structure of discourse in order to teach reading more effectively. A knowledge of how cohesion and coherence are obtained in texts may be a more powerful teaching tool than any other understanding of the nature of language that the teacher has acquired.

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Bright Ideas

The Two-Track Variable Response System

Nigel Rider and Elena McCretton

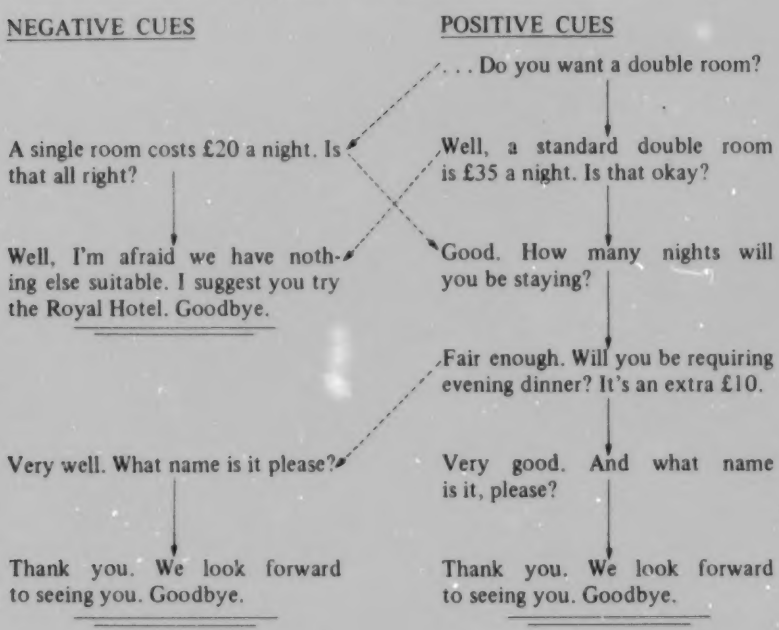
Nobody seems to have much faith in the poor old language lab these days—and with real justification. As it is generally used, the language lab offers only a very poor approximation of actual language experience. The Two-Track Variable Response System is a technique designed to offer intensive listening practice by exploiting the language lab's most convincing similarity to authentic language use—namely, responding to the disembodied voice one hears over the telephone. So in this exercise the student has to respond intelligently to a "caller"—a demanding and essential task for any foreign businessman.

But that's not quite enough. If the exercise is to be realistic, it must allow the student some choice. Hence the use of two soundtracks to provide that choice. Conventional stereo tapes have two tracks (or channels): right and left. In a language lab, these two tracks are usually designated as the Master track and the Student track. With the two-track "variable response" system, the student listens to one side of a dialogue and responds to questions orally with either a positive or negative answer. The student then switches to the corresponding "positive" or "negative" track in order to continue the conversation. He can listen to the tape several times, varying his responses each time.

Figure 1 is an excerpt from a two-track script in which the student makes a hotel reservation. The solid arrows indicate a five-second pause for the student's response, and the broken arrows show where he can switch tracks. In response to the first question, "Do you want a double room?" the student is free to reply that he wants a double (positive response) or, alternatively, that he wants a single (negative response). In the former case, he stays

Nigel Rider and Elena McCretton both attended the Post-graduate Certificate of Education T.E.F.L. course at the University College of North Wales, Bangor (U.K.), and have taught EFL and ESP in Italy, Spain, England, and Saudi Arabia. Additionally, Ms. McCretton has taught EFL at Toyama Medical University, Japan.

Figure 1: Excerpt from "A Hotel Reservation"


NEGATIVE CUES
POSITIVE CUES
. . . Do you want a double room?
A single room costs £20 a night. Is that all right?
Well, a standard double room is £35 a night. Is that okay?
Well, I'm afraid we have nothing else suitable. I suggest you try the Royal Hotel. Goodbye.
Good. How many nights will you be staying?
Fair enough. Will you be requiring evening dinner? It's an extra £10.
Very well. What name is it please?
Very good. And what name is it, please?
Thank you. We look forward to seeing you. Goodbye.
Thank you. We look forward to seeing you. Goodbye.

with the positive cues and next hears the price and a request for confirmation. In the latter case, he switches over to the negative cues on the second track and hears about the single room. So the dialogue continues, with the student responding positively or negatively to any of the suggestions put to him, and switching accordingly to the corresponding track.

Here are two examples of possible dialogues resulting from the student's interaction with the two-track tape. Trace the conversation through the two-track script (Figure 1):

Hotel clerk: *. . . Do you want a double room?*
Student: Yes, a double, please. (POSITIVE)
Hotel clerk: *Well, a standard double is £35 a night. Is that okay?*
Student: Is there a cheaper one? My budget is tight. (NEGATIVE)
Hotel clerk: *Well, I'm afraid we have nothing else suitable. I suggest you try the Royal Hotel. Goodbye.*

Hotel clerk: *. . . Do you want a double room?*
Student: No, a single, please. (NEGATIVE)

Hotel clerk: *A single room costs £20 a night. Is that all right?*
Student: Yes, it's okay. (POSITIVE)
Hotel clerk: *Good. How many nights will you be staying?*
Student: Let's see. Two nights. (NEUTRAL)
Hotel clerk: *Fair enough. Will you be requiring evening dinner? It's an extra £10.*
Student: No, thanks. We'll have dinner out. (NEGATIVE)
Hotel clerk: *Very well. What name is it please?*
Student: My name is _____. (NEUTRAL)
Hotel clerk: *Thank you. We look forward to seeing you.*

Note that the script includes several questions which do not require a yes or no answer; for example, "How many nights will you be staying?" In such cases the student response is "neutral" and the student does not have to switch tracks. In most cases, however, the student will judge his response to be positive or negative and will switch tracks accordingly.

If you have difficulty imagining this activity from the students' viewpoint, get somebody to play the part of the hotel clerk by reading the script aloud, while you answer each question in a natural manner.

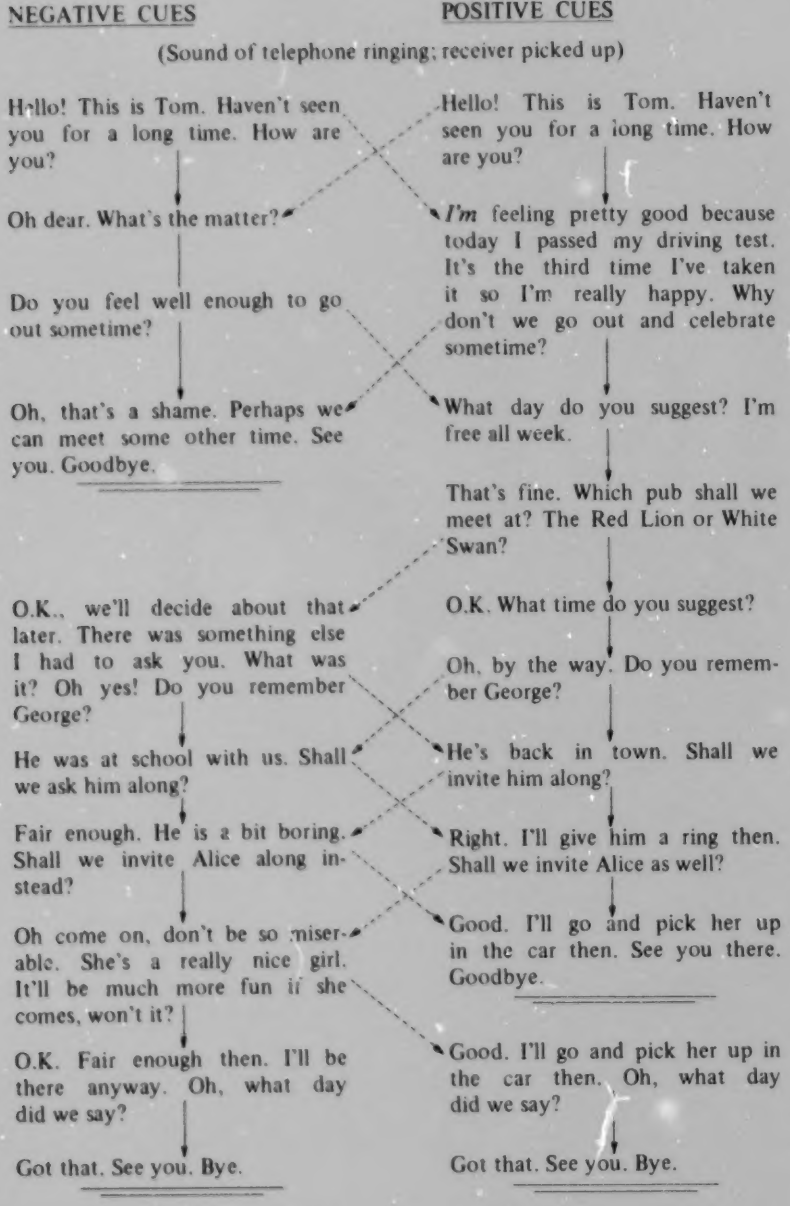
Designing the Tape-script

The following tape-script (Figure 2), in which the student receives a call from a friend, illustrates some of the techniques used in designing a two-track script.

In designing a script, it is important that most of the questions prompt a definite yes or no reply. For example, if instead of "Shall we invite him along?" the question had been "Shall we invite him along or go by ourselves?" the student would not have known which track to switch to. In the case of the question "Which pub shall we meet at? The Red Lion or White Swan?" a response of either "The Red Lion" or "The White Swan" is recognized as a positive response, while an answer of "Neither" or "I don't care" is considered negative. Notice that the first question can be recorded on both tracks.

Remember that the two tracks must keep pace with each other on the tape, so some time-filling may be necessary in places. Tom's memory lapse ("There was something else I had to ask you. What was it? Oh, yes! . . .") serves just this purpose, filling in the negative track while the question "What time do you suggest?" and a

Figure 2: "An Invitation"


NEGATIVE CUES
POSITIVE CUES
(Sound of telephone ringing; receiver picked up)
Hello! This is Tom. Haven't seen you for a long time. How are you?
Hello! This is Tom. Haven't seen you for a long time. How are you?
Oh dear. What's the matter?
I'm feeling pretty good because today I passed my driving test. It's the third time I've taken it so I'm really happy. Why don't we go out and celebrate sometime?
Do you feel well enough to go out sometime?
What day do you suggest? I'm free all week.
Oh, that's a shame. Perhaps we can meet some other time. See you. Goodbye.
That's fine. Which pub shall we meet at? The Red Lion or White Swan?
O.K., we'll decide about that later. There was something else I had to ask you. What was it? Oh yes! Do you remember George?
O.K. What time do you suggest?
Oh, by the way. Do you remember George?
He was at school with us. Shall we ask him along?
He's back in town. Shall we invite him along?
Fair enough. He is a bit boring. Shall we invite Alice along instead?
Right. I'll give him a ring then. Shall we invite Alice as well?
Oh come on, don't be so miserable. She's a really nice girl. It'll be much more fun if she comes, won't it?
Good. I'll go and pick her up in the car then. See you there. Goodbye.
O.K. Fair enough then. I'll be there anyway. Oh, what day did we say?
Good. I'll go and pick her up in the car then. Oh, what day did we say?
Got that. See you. Bye.
Got that. See you. Bye.

five-second pause for the reply occupy the positive track. In a similar manner, the question "What day do you suggest?" keeps the student on the positive track, since the question does not call for a positive or negative reply. In such a case, the next cue must be designed to fit any student response. "That's fine" makes perfect sense no matter what day of the week the student suggests.

If we have a student who consistently gives negative responses, notice how we can shunt him away with a fast "Goodbye," as in the first part of "An Invitation." This frees the second track again so that it can receive other switches to the negative track later in the dialogue. Thus, in this script there are many possible response combinations and therefore four separate "Goodbyes."

Recording the Script

Once the script for a particular situation has been worked out, it can be recorded on tape, using an ordinary two-track reel-to-reel tape recorder or a language lab. With the former, first record the positive cues on the first track, leaving a five-second pause between each cue to give the student time for his response. Then rewind, switch over to the second track, and record the negative cues. You must of course be careful to synchronize the two sets of cues. For example, in "An Invitation," "Oh, that's a shame. . . ." on the negative track should match up with "What day do you suggest? . . ." on the positive track. This is easily done with modern tape recorders, as you can listen through headphones to your voice on one track as you record onto the other. Otherwise, note down the numbers on the tape counter at the start of each cue and use these to guide the second track recording.

Students can listen to the exercise on the same machine, or you might like to transfer the recording onto a tape cassette. This will provide students with easy access to the material, which they can use in their own time on any stereo cassette machine. In this case, they will switch tracks by simply turning the balance control from left channel to right channel.

When using a language lab (such as the Tandberg IS8), follow these steps:

1. Load cassettes into all the student machines.
2. Record the positive cues directly from the microphone on the Master Console to all the student machines (i.e. on the Master track).

3. Rewind the cassettes.

4. The negative cues now have to be individually recorded on each student machine. Go to the first booth, and record by pressing the SPEAK button (i.e. on the Student track). You can hear the positive cues on the Master track played through the headphones to help you synchronize the two tracks. Do the same for each tape.

5. Rewind, and break out the tabs at the back of the cassette to prevent erasure. This tape can now be used for listening only, and there is no danger of the student accidently recording his own voice onto the Student track.

6. When students use the lab, have them press the LISTEN button. By turning the Master Volume and Student Volume headphone controls simultaneously (one to maximum and the other to minimum), students can switch tracks.

The two-track system aims to provide unrehearsed and authentic practice in telephone conversations. The students have to understand an English native speaker (with no other information but that received by their ears), make rapid decisions, and respond within a given time. So they gradually learn to cope with such situations as booking a flight, or a theatre ticket, or a holiday. One advantage is that the students can listen to the tape several times until they achieve confidence and fluency.

The system can be used in the lab, in which case the teacher can monitor performance and provide feedback. Alternatively, it can be used on a self-access basis, the students borrowing cassettes from a small "library" and playing them at home on a stereo cassette machine.[1] We feel quite strongly that students should not see the actual tape-scripts; however, some teachers may wish students to study them subsequent to the listening phase, in order to concentrate on stress and intonation.

Doubtless, in the very near future, we shall see the lab supplanted by microcomputers with visual displays and voiceboxes, and with cartoon figures who speak to you and respond, more or less, to your replies. Then the machine-based language learning revolution will really take off.

But in the meantime, the Two-Track Variable Response System offers a way to mildly rejuvenate the poor old language lab.

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[1] Cassettes made with lab machines will not usually be compatible with ordinary stereo cassette machines, and vice-versa, because the recording heads are placed at different positions.

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Inquiry Training for Increasing Students' Fluency

Masakazu Karita

A major problem facing English teachers in Japan is how to increase their students' fluency. Since students have very little chance to speak English outside the classroom, students need to make the most of their time in the classroom. Inquiry Training is a classroom activity aimed at increasing fluency by requiring students to ask as many questions as possible in response to stimulus sentences introduced by the teacher. And since asking questions is a common and useful way to start and maintain any conversation, Inquiry Training is also an effective way of meeting the communicative needs of the students. In this way, students' fluency as well as their talking time in class might increase significantly.

Inquiry Training is for students who have some background in English grammar, reading, writing, listening, and speaking. It can help students progress from the elementary level and requires only a simple classroom arrangement.

To begin the activity, find a subject your students have in common. I have discovered that food, desserts, the opposite sex, dating, and sports are interesting topics among young people. As you learn more about your class, you can discover interests unique to them.

Next, think up a simple sentence related to the chosen subject. This sentence will serve as a stimulus to encourage them to ask questions. For example, if students are given the stimulus sentence "I met a girl," they will soon make up questions such as "Was she pretty?" "Where did you meet her?" "When did you meet her?" "What was her name?" and so on. You should also prepare several slightly changed stimulus sentences; for example, "I met a boy," "My brother saw a young lady," "I met an old man," and "I'm going to meet a girl."

Now you are ready to try out the sentences with your class. Have the students sit in a semi-circle, facing the blackboard. Give

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the primary stimulus sentence to your class and let them ask questions. You should answer each question each time it is presented. Then, after about five minutes, give your students two slightly changed stimulus sentences and do the same, again allowing five minutes for each sentence. (15 minutes)

The second stage is a follow-up of the first, where error correction can be accomplished. At this stage, hand out model questions and explain them to your students. Then help your students memorize them. This will improve their ability to create grammatically correct questions and improve their speed as well. (15 minutes)

By now your students should have a sense of the correct form of the questions they will use in this activity. So give two more slightly changed stimulus sentences and invite your students' questions. By changing the tense of the stimulus sentence, you can teach students the correct usage of the different verb forms in context. For example, if the primary stimulus sentence is "I went to Kyoto," slightly changed stimulus sentences might be "I had to go to Kyoto" and "I'm going to Hokkaido." For practice in speed, challenge each student to ask more than six questions within one minute. Be sure to answer each question promptly so that students will perceive Inquiry Training as a natural question-and-answer activity and not a mechanical substitution drill. (15 minutes)

Once your students become familiar with Inquiry Training, allow some of them, one by one, to stand in front of the class to give the stimulus sentence and answer other students' questions. If your class is large, it may be wise to divide them into small groups for this. Because the students are involved in both roles in this stage, the activity becomes entirely student-generated, a powerful factor in motivating students to participate. (15 minutes)

For follow-up exercises to Inquiry Training, you might quiz your students on a new stimulus sentence, asking them to generate ten questions about it, or you might wish to reinforce the new vocabulary and sentence structures presented in the activity in other ways which are compatible with your curriculum and students.

As stated earlier, the primary objective of Inquiry Training is to enable students to speak fluently. In addition, it demands close listening, and therefore helps develop listening skills. I have also found that Inquiry Training can involve the secondary objectives of

enabling students to improve their reading and writing skills, and students naturally improve their grammar through the step of error correction.

According to my experience, students enjoy and value Inquiry Training. In questionnaires concerning Inquiry Training they have commented, "I can now speak English faster than I used to," "I can read a book faster and understand it much better than I used to," "I pay attention to what I write in an essay since I got a habit of asking questions," and "I wish this lesson would last longer. It helped me a lot." These and other comments have let me know that Inquiry Training is indeed an important activity.

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Using Short Newspaper Articles with ESL Students

Derald H. Nielson

Newspaper articles offer ESL students, and especially ESP students, a chance to work with the vocabulary and structures that are frequently used in the real world. I follow these procedures:

1. *Selecting The Article*

I select an article from the morning newspaper just before going into class. I try to select an article that appeals to the interests of the class. This advice seems obvious, but it isn't always. When I choose the article, I draw a circle around it and copy as much of the newspage as I can, including the date if possible. The realization that the article is very current helps to increase student investment.

It is important to select an article that is not too long. The first article that I used with my Intermediate/Upper-Intermediate businessmen's class was seventy words long. I have also selected longer articles and then worked with only the first few paragraphs. This seems to work well, and from student questions I know they are often motivated to read the rest of the article. As the students become accustomed to the working procedures, longer articles can be used.

2. *Pre-Reading*

Before handing a copy of the article to students and asking them to read it, I usually do some work with the headline by asking students to imagine what the article is likely to be about. This sets the students' imaginations in motion and helps them to anticipate what they are going to read, and thus furthers their understanding.

3. *Reading*

Before the students read the article, I tell them to put away their dictionaries, explaining that they will have time and opportunity to discuss words and structures they don't understand. I limit the amount of time they have to read the article by telling

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them exactly how much time they have, and then hold to it very strictly. The purpose of this is to encourage the students to read the entire article before becoming concerned with individual words or structures. Invariably, the first time I use this procedure with a new class, someone will not follow my advice to ignore, for the time being, unfamiliar items. When we do another article later, there is usually no problem if the student has been allowed to make his own adjustment to the class procedures.

4. *Discussion*

After the students have read the article, I ask them to work in pairs or small groups and discuss the article and the words, phrases, and sentences that they have questions about or are unfamiliar with. I also ask them to make note of the things they discuss even if they are able to find satisfactory explanations.

5. *The "Dictionary"*

The next step is to ask the groups for the items they discussed and write them on a large sheet of paper or on the chalkboard. I then ask the students to supply definitions or explanations for those things that they were able to deal with in their groups and I also write these on the paper. Finally, I ask them to volunteer explanations of any items that have not yet been resolved. In the end there are only a few items that the students themselves have not been able to explain that I need to deal with. In this way we create a "dictionary" of the items that the students discussed.

One method I use for eliciting definitions from the students is to ask them to supply synonyms or antonyms of the words. Definitions which make the meaning clear but are unacceptable as colloquial English are confirmed as defining the word, but I don't include them in the "dictionary." An example of this is when a student offered the word "child company" as an antonym for "parent company." In this case, I wrote the correct form, "subsidiary company," on the paper.

6. *Questions and Answers–Round One*

The next step is to ask the students, again working in pairs, to write a question about the article that can be answered from the article, but imagining that they are interviewing someone related to the story; for example, the president of a company in an article

about a joint venture project. These questions are written on a new sheet of paper and each group or pair is assigned to answer a question or questions that were written by another group. The answers are written up as well.

As I write the students' questions and answers on the paper, I make corrections for grammaticality and appropriateness. I do this as quickly as possible, only making brief comments such as "I think this would be better" or "Do you mean . . . ?" Later I give the students an opportunity to ask questions about the changes I made and also devise exercises to practice those things that needed correction most often.

7. *Questions and Answers–Round Two*

The next step is similar to the previous one except that I ask the students to ask a question that cannot be specifically answered from information in the article, something that could only be answered by someone directly involved in the situation described in the article. Again the questions are assigned to a pair different from the one that wrote them. Posing and answering these questions can be both more difficult and more interesting than in the previous step because they require that the students use more imagination. I encourage the students to imagine as many additional details as they can.

8. *Follow-up Activities*

There are several different types of follow-up activities that I have used successfully.

One such activity is to ask the students to write a similar, imaginary article of their own. Working in small groups of three or four the students create a newspaper article using as many of the structures and words from the "dictionary" as they can. Each group then reads their article to the rest of the class. The usual result is the groups vying with each other to make up the most imaginative story.

Another idea is to have the students role-play the characters, real or imagined, from the article.[1] This can be a simple repetition of the questions and answers already created. Or it can become a more elaborated and extended interview, using some of the material

[1] This activity was suggested by Patti Mendes of LIOJ.

already created by the students, but allowing for more questions. This in turn creates an opportunity for the teacher to make suggestions about the relevance and appropriateness of questions.

The words, phrases and sentences on the large piece of paper can also be used as material for a "human computer drill."[2] Briefly, this entails the teacher standing behind the students who are facing the paper on the wall or chalkboard. When a student reads a word, phrase, or sentence from the paper, the teacher repeats after the student. All exchanges are initiated and terminated by the student. The teacher does not offer correction per se, but—like a computer—repeats (with correct pronunciation, grammar, etc.) what the student has said, regardless of whether the student's utterance is correct or not. This gives the student a correct model of his own utterance. The student can then try again or stop. This is effective for practicing the pronunciation of a single word, the intonation and phrasing of a sentence or part of a sentence, and the grammatical changes required when the student attempts to change a word in a sentence.

This activity uses reading as a starting point for speaking activities which can stimulate and challenge the creativity of EFL and ESL students. Most importantly, it provides a realistic context for formulating questions and allows the students to bring all of their prior knowledge into the lesson.

[2] I first saw the "human computer" used by Robert Ryan when we worked together at Bunka Institute of Languages.

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Book Reviews

STORY SQUARES: FLUENCY IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE. Phillip L. Knowles and Ruth A. Sasaki. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers., 1980, pp. 251.

I recently started using a book which I have found to be one of those special texts in ESL whose uses are limited only by the teacher's imagination. Unfortunately, I feel that this book has not received the recognition it deserves, possibly due to the innovative nature of the material and the approach. The book is *Story Squares: Fluency in English as a Second Language*, written by Phillip L. Knowles and Ruth A. Sasaki and first published in 1980. The book is designed primarily for intermediate students, but I have used it very successfully in more basic classes. The approach is speaking-oriented, and the material is organized to introduce or focus upon specific grammatico-semantic or pronunciation areas. Following the idea that students learn a language by using that language, the material employs a problem-solving approach to language learning.

The core of the material is the use of squares, each consisting of a grid of from four to sixteen related pictures. As the authors write, "The squares provide visual representation of the information and logical relationships about which students communicate. The content has been designed to require students to express, contrast, or distinguish between several meanings or sounds in context" (Teacher's manual: 3). Knowles and Sasaki have been very clever in designing the squares so as to elicit grammatico-semantic concepts, modals, conditionals, and other grammatical forms. They have also included many phonemic contrasts to focus on pronunciation. To ease the students' necessity to memorize, the squares (or "visualizations") act as mnemonic devices which permit the students to concentrate on concepts and abstract ideas, while allowing them to express these ideas by means of whatever language they may possess. In this way, students--especially false beginners--are encouraged to exploit their passive knowledge of English. The grammar is constantly recycled, allowing for continuous review of the same materials in different contexts, thus creating a spiral learning effect.

It is important to note here that these squares are not simply pictures to be described. Instead, each square contains implied stories or relationships which the students must discuss and/or discover. I have found that as the students work on a square, the characters and situations become real for them, and they enjoy working out the relationships embedded in the squares. The students also become excited and involved in the search for the correct way to say something. The material is especially suitable for small group and pair work.

The book is divided into two parts: twenty-five Fluency Squares followed by five more complex Story Squares. The Fluency Squares can be used with basic through upper-intermediate students and are designed for focusing upon specific grammatico-semantic and pronunciation problems. The beginning squares are quite simple, becoming grammatically more complex as the book progresses. Fluency Squares, as distinct from Story Squares, have no complicated relationships among the characters. For example, Fluency Square 2 is concerned with two young women, Cassie and Kathy. Cassie is pictured riding the bus in the morning and sitting in the bathtub at night; Kathy is pictured doing the same things but in the opposite time sequence. The underlying focus here is both phonemic (bath/bus, Kathy/Cassie) and grammatical (simple present and habitual action): Cassie takes a bus in the morning and a bath at night; Kathy takes a bath in the morning and a bus at night. The complete lesson, as described in the accompanying teacher's manual, includes oral and written questions (Who takes the bus in the morning? Does Kathy take a bus in the morning or the evening? etc.), a dictation, and a listening test.

All the Fluency Squares follow a similar format, but the later ones deal with much more complex grammar. Fluency Square 25, for example, deals with modals, conditionals, irregular verbs, and time sequence. This square has six pictures portraying Burt and Bart at work and on vacation in the past, present, and hypothetical future. The basic information for the first three pictures suggests the difficulty of the material and the challenge to the students: "[Square 1] Last year Burt went on a trip to Europe and spent all his money on a Mercedes-Benz and expensive clothes. [Square 2] Now Burt would like to tour the Middle East, but he doesn't have enough money, so he's working as a bartender. [Square 3] If he can afford it, Burt will quit his job next year and go see the pyramids

with his girlfriend" (78). It is important to stress that this information is represented by means of pictures, not words, and that students are encouraged to use whatever language they possess to talk about these characters and situations. In discussing this information, students are required to distinguish among various types of modals, such as certainty, probability, possibility, and responsibility, and the question-formation activities will require a similar precision of language use in context.

The five Story Squares are more complex than the Fluency Squares, focusing more on conceptual (rather than grammatical) areas. Each square contains embedded information about the characters and their relationships with each other. These relationships are not always simple and discovering them often requires imagination and creativity on the part of the students. In addition, these relationships make up the story which the students have to figure out by asking questions to the teacher and by discussing the story among themselves. The teacher knows the story and guides the students by helping them when necessary until they have worked out the complete story. This whole process forces the students to experiment with the language and to think and act in English while manipulating and integrating grammatical forms into meaningful sentences. I also found that this problem-solving activity enables students who are stronger in the group to be more expressive when they want to be so; in other words, they are not confined to rigid structures and can experiment with any strategies which they might have in their repertoire.

The authors' implicit focus on the meaning of grammatical forms becomes more apparent the more one uses the squares. In particular, the book emphasizes the importance of verb forms. Knowles and Sasaki have developed an approach to teaching the English verb system—the predicate marker system—based on the ideas of Martin Joos. These ideas are nontraditional and somewhat controversial. In all honesty, I did at first find this system a little difficult to understand; but as I began to use it, I found it to be a succinct and appropriate approach to teaching the English verb system. I eventually became more comfortable with the system and found it to be very useful in explaining many of the apparent ambiguities in the verb system that often puzzle students.

There is an excellent teacher's manual which accompanies the textbook, explaining the overall approach and explaining how each

unit is to be exploited. It also gives extensive notes on grammatical and other areas that can be problematic for both teachers and students. In addition to the "basic information" describing the squares themselves, the teacher's manual includes sample oral/written questions, suggestions for expansion, a dictation, and a listening test. These supplementary exercises offer students the chance for review and reinforcement and for further experimentation with the language. They also allow the teacher to determine if the students have succeeded in mastering the material.

There are two weaknesses which I found in the book. The first is that the authors have included several grammatical explanations in the students' book which are quite lengthy and perhaps somewhat difficult for students to grasp. It seems to me that the main idea is to move away from grammar lessons and toward a communicative lesson; therefore, this might not be the right place for grammar notes. The notes are useful for the teacher and would be more appropriate in the teacher's manual. The other weakness is that when using the squares, it is very helpful to have large poster-size representations of them. This gives one point of focus for all the students when it is a whole class activity. At the moment, such posters are not available and it is necessary for the teachers to make their own. This can be very time consuming and it would be very useful if the publishers made these posters available to the teachers.

In conclusion I would like to add that I feel this book offers teachers many possibilities to be free from the rigid constraints imposed by some other textbooks. Not only is there the possibility for creativity on the part of the student but also on the part of the teacher. I also feel the basic assumptions behind the book and the novel way in which they are presented is very refreshing. All of these qualities make *Story Squares* a welcome addition to the field of ESL teaching materials.

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BASIC TECHNICAL ENGLISH. Jeremy Comfort, Steve Hick, and Allan Savage. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982. Teacher's Book, pp. 99; Student Book, pp. 90.

For anyone who teaches English to engineers this new book by Oxford will be a welcome addition to the curriculum. The book is designed as a reading course for basic students and is intended to introduce the essential language forms and vocabulary needed every day by any engineer.

Basic Technical English is divided into twenty-four units—each unit focusing on specific concepts and functions, such as classifying, hypothesizing, recommending, and comparing. Overall, the units are divided into three major types of functions: static description (for example, describing different types of pipe-fittings); dynamic description (for example, describing the process of die-casting); and instruction (for example, making recommendations for on-the-job safety). The lessons have been carefully designed and graded so that the language forms and functions are recycled several times in different contexts. Each unit also uses many excellent diagrams and line drawings to clearly illustrate the vocabulary and processes.

Each unit is divided into four parts: Presentation, where the key vocabulary and grammatical structures are introduced; Practice, where these features are reinforced; Development, where the same language features are presented in a different context; and Summary, which includes a list of the new vocabulary.

The teacher's book includes a well-organized Course Overview listing the functions/concepts, language forms, discourse features, and topics for each unit. This is very useful if you want to pick and choose lessons according to the needs of your students. At the beginning of each unit the teacher's book clearly states the purpose of the unit and describes the language forms covered in that unit. For teachers with no technical background, there are ample technical notes and simple explanations of terms and processes. Each lesson also contains suggested procedures for presenting each lesson. An answer key is also provided in the teacher's book.

The book claims to be for students with no previous knowledge of English, but the student would need at least basic proficiency to read the text without assistance. This book would

also be difficult to use for self-study because there is no answer key provided in the student's book. Another minor problem with the book is that the blanks provided for the written exercises in the Practice section are too small.

I have found this book to work best as a supplement to other materials to help reinforce useful language functions and forms in a way students see to be immediately practical. The exercises can easily be adapted for pairwork and small group activities. The students enjoy the exercises and I feel this book will be an excellent addition to any teacher's library.

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Michael J. Kleindl received an M.A. in ESL from Southern Illinois University. He is currently an instructor at the Language Institute of Japan.

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1984 WHIM CONFERENCE ON CONTEMPORARY HUMOR. March 28-April 1, 1984; Phoenix, Arizona. Sponsored by Arizona State University English Department and Conference Services. To be held at the Phoenix Townehouse Hotel. For further information, contact Don and Alleen Nilsen, English Department, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona 85287, U.S.A.

RELC 19th REGIONAL SEMINAR: Communicative Language Teaching. April 23-27, 1984; Singapore. Sponsored by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Regional Language Centre (RELC). The objectives of the seminar are: a) to consider the applicability of the communicative approach to language teaching in the various countries of Southeast Asia; b) to review theoretical concepts that are relevant to communicative language teaching; c) to discuss how these concepts relate to syllabus design, materials development, teaching methodology, and evaluation; d) to explore specific applications of the communicative approach in the classroom, including the appropriate use of educational technology; and e) to examine the factors involved in planning and implementing communicative language programs in Southeast Asia and elsewhere. Further information and invitations to participate in the seminar can be obtained from: Director (Attention: Chairman, Seminar Planning Committee), SEAMEO Regional Language Centre, RELC Building, 30 Orange Grove Road, Singapore 1025, Republic of Singapore.

ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE (EIL): ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS. July 3-August 10, 1984; Honolulu, Hawaii. Sponsored by the Culture Learning Institute of the East-West Center. The seminar is designed for native and non-native speakers of English who train teachers, write materials, or develop language policy. The cost is US$ 1000, which covers registration, accommodation, health insurance, and seminar materials. Each participant is responsible for roundtrip airfare, food, and all personal expenses. The application deadline is February 15, 1984. For more information and an application form, write to: Larry E. Smith, EIL Coordinator, Culture Learning Institute, East-West Center, 1777 East-West Road, Honolulu, Hawaii 96848.

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